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CULTIVATING CULTURAL WORKERS THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING IN
TEACHER EDUCATION

by

MELANIE WILLIAMS THORNTON

(Under the Direction of Ming Fang He)

ABSTRACT

This is the study of cultivating cultural workers through service learning in teacher education. The five participants Kathy (European American), Denise (African American), Alberto (Hispanic American), McKenzie (African American), and Zena (African American) were pre-service teachers enrolled in a developmental reading program at a college in Southwest Georgia where service learning was the major conceptual framework. The five participants were born in the mid 1980s, attended high schools in Georgia in the U. S., and entered colleges in the Fall of 2004. My passion for this inquiry is driven by my desire to foster a sense of agency for social justice and transformation for positive changes in the community. During the collaborative research process, we shared our intense feelings about what it means to serve to the community, the importance of reading, and our outlook on the teaching field.

Part of the challenge in writing this dissertation was to develop an inquiry method relevant to the study. The inquiry method used in this study is a combination of community based research and narrative inquiry--community based narrative inquiry. The most important finding of the study is that there is a need for developing a pre-service education curriculum with service learning as the major conceptual framework to

empower pre-service teachers to become cultural workers for the community and agents for social justice and social change.

The theoretical framework of my dissertation inquiry draws upon the works of John Dewey (1938), Paulo Freire (1970), Anna Julia Cooper (1892), and W.E.B. DuBois (1920). John Dewey is the primary theorist of the theoretical framework for this study. Dewey was a proponent in reflective thinking which is an integral part of the service learning experience. Using experience and consciousness to make reading come alive is the reason that Freire's work is vital to this study. Cooper's mantra of "lifting as we climb" and her work with underprepared students makes her work significant to the theoretical framework. DuBois theory of education as a practice of freedom and consciousness also contributes to the theoretical framework of this dissertation inquiry which helps perceive service learning as a way of connecting education with life in the school and community, as a participatory and liberating process, as community based initiatives and outcomes, and as ways of raising critical consciousness, fostering empowerment, and building community to cultivate pre-service teachers to become cultural workers.

Though my study focused on pre-service teachers enrolled in a developmental reading program, it has significance for recognition for developing a curriculum with service learning as the major conceptual framework. It has implications for policymakers, teacher educators, and communities of the importance to work together to prepare pre-service teachers to become cultural workers in an increasingly diversifying world.

INDEX WORDS: Critical Consciousness, Developmental Education, Community Based Narrative Inquiry, Pre-Service Teachers, Service Learning, Teacher Education

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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TEACHER EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Whitney D. Thornton, my beautiful daughter, and to my parents, Elijah and Mary Frances Williams. Thanks for your love, patience, and support.

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I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13) carried me through this process. Thank you, Jesus. I would like to thank Bishop Willie J. Toomer, Sister Olivia Toomer, Pastor Whitlow, and many others for praying for me.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	7
LIST OF FIGURES.....	12
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	13
Context of the Study	14
Research Questions.....	17
Autobiographical Roots	18
Theoretical Framework.....	22
John Dewey.....	23
Paulo Friere.....	26
Anna Julia Cooper.....	28
W.E.B. DuBois.....	30
Methodology	32
Participants.....	32
Significance of the Study.....	33
Outline of the Dissertation.....	35
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.	37
Service Learning.....	38
Definitions of Service Learning.....	38
The History of Service Learning.....	40
Criticisms of Service Learning.....	45

Benefits of Service Learning.....	48
Cultural Workers.....	50
Connections: Curriculum Studies and Service Learning.....	51
Connections: Service Learning and Developmental Education.....	54
Developmental Reading in Georgia.....	56
Pre-Service Teachers in Developmental Reading.....	57
Classroom Dynamics: Brief Exploration of White Privilege.....	59
Research on the Education of African Americans in the South.....	64
Raising Consciousness in Service Learning in a Developmental Education Program.....	68
Criticisms of Raising Consciousness.....	70
Benefits of Raising Consciousness.....	71
Empowerment.....	71
Building Community.....	73
Teaching for Social Justice.....	74
Teaching for Transformation.....	75
Summary.....	77
3: COLLECTING STORIES	79
Theoretical Framework	79
Community Based Narrative Inquiry.....	80
Role of the Researcher.....	83
Research Process.....	84
College Portraiture.....	85

Participant Selection.....	88
Teacher/Research Reflective Journal.....	89
Individual Interviews.....	90
Participant Profiles.....	91
Organizing Field Texts.....	91
Analyzing Field Texts.....	91
Transforming Stories into Research Text.....	93
Composing Field Texts.....	93
4. DATA PRESENTATION: STUDENT INTERVIEWS.....	96
Participant Profiles.....	97
Kathy.....	97
Denise.....	98
Alberto.....	99
Zena.....	100
McKenzie.....	100
Service Learning Experience.....	101
Interview with Kathy.....	101
Interview with Denise.....	103
Interview with Alberto.....	104
Interview with Zena.....	105
Interview with McKenzie.....	106
Service Learning Likes and Dislikes.....	107
Interview with Kathy.....	107

Interview with Denise.....	109
Interview with Alberto.....	110
Interview with Zena.....	111
Interview with McKenzie.....	112
Self-Noted Change.....	113
Interview with Kathy.....	114
Interview with Denise.....	115
Interview with Alberto.....	116
Interview with Zena.....	119
Interview with McKenzie.....	120
Future Volunteerism.....	121
Interview with Kathy.....	121
Interview with Denise.....	122
Interview with Alberto.....	123
Interview with Zena.....	125
Interview with McKenzie.....	125
5. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS.....	127
REFERENCES	146
APPENDICES	161
A CONSENT FORM.....	162
B INTERVIEW PROMPTS	166

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: Service Area for Darton College	87

CHAPTER 1

“Everyone can be great because anyone can serve.”

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

INTRODUCTION

This study explored using service learning to raise the critical consciousness of students in developmental education. The study examined the impact of this phenomena on pre-service teachers enrolled in a developmental reading course at a college in Southwest Georgia. Service learning provides a way of introducing students to diverse communities. Research shows that pre-service teachers need to be introduced to diverse cultures through first hand experiences. Gay and Kirkland (2003) argue that “developing personal and professional critical consciousness about racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity should be a major component of pre-service teacher education” (p.1). As a part of this study, I hoped to uncover the residual effects of service learning on pre-service teachers. Because service learning is a new portal to understanding, I believe that this dissertation research is directly related to the field of curriculum studies. Just as the reconceptualization of curriculum opened doors for alternative ways of understanding education, hence this study will help facilitate the humanization of many societal problems that affect all of us directly or indirectly.

Through an extensive review of literature, I show that service learning has great potential value. It is an academic form of community service that blends both the curriculum and service activities directly related to the course content. There are three national community service initiatives: Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve. The national initiative that specifically addresses service learning is called, “Learn and

Serve.” The program was formerly known as, “Serve America” (NSLC, 2005). This program enables schools, colleges, and nonprofit groups to receive grant funding to improve communities while preparing students for a lifetime of responsible citizenship and service to others. According to the National Clearinghouse for Service Learning, during the 2005-2006 school year, there were 16,239 students across Georgia actively involved in documented Learn and Serve programs (NSLC, 2005). These programs received a combined total of \$1,000,286 from government grants. Only 336 of the 16,239 students involved in documented funded service learning were enrolled at institutions of higher education. At the present time, Darton College does not have a Learn and Serve grant or any other grant associated with national community service initiatives.

This study explored the use and potential benefits of service learning in developmental reading. The target population of students were five pre-service teachers enrolled in a READ 0099 course a two-year college in Albany, Georgia. In order to accomplish this goal, community based narrative inquiry was used to capture the perceptions of the students involved. I also reviewed several bodies of literature to support my theoretical framework, inquiry method, and service learning.

Context of the Study

According to Connolly (2005), nationally approximately 40% of the nation’s 4-year colleges and universities and 50% of the 2-year colleges have service learning opportunities for students. This learning tool has great potential impact on the educational and economic environment of the nation, and Georgia specifically, because it facilitates students becoming involved educated citizens. Nationally, “business leaders argue that the United States cannot afford to continue having a high school graduation rate that,

according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, lags behind those of more than a dozen other industrialized nations, including the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, and Italy” (Schmidt, 2006). I maintain that this lag is due in part to the lack of critical consciousness in current school as well as the push for more standardization. The Spellings Report (2006) entitled “A Test of Leadership,” noted that “shortcomings in high schools mean that an unacceptable number of college students must take costly remedial classes” (p.23). This fact is important to this study because the pre-service teachers involved all went to school during this tumultuous period of sweeping standardization.

“One of the most vexing issues facing contemporary educators involves the seemingly competing imperatives of meeting highstakes accountability standards while addressing the individual needs and strengths of diverse learners” (McTighe, 2004 p.1). According to Clune (1993), more ambitious instruction in schools can be achieved through systemic educational policy which mandates a centralized curriculum framework, high stakes student assessments and coordinated teacher training. The national push for bureaucratic standardization, in my estimation, stems from many high level administrators being intellectually left behind in the educational dark ages of the period of curriculum development.

Campano (2005) noted that the current climate of standardization wreaks havoc on teachers’ ability to accommodate students with marginalized experiences while attempting to fulfill the needs of the institution. I contend that teaching in the era of standardization causes teachers to be in constant conflict between their students’ needs and the requirements of the institution. Morris (2005) warns, “our school systems have

never been more in danger from the stagnations of standardization; education is getting short shrifted one again by national budget cuts; children are dropping out of schools at alarming rates” (p.3). Pre-service teachers need an internal coping mechanism that will allow them to recognize that this conflict will exist during their careers. This type of constant conflict has the ability to dull their critical consciousness. Gay and Kirkland (2003, p. 3), espoused that “critical consciousness is imperative to improving educational ... outcomes” Service learning is the educational tool that will help them realize this inevitability. Service learning may not fit neatly into the current standardized curriculum, but it has the potential to create long lasting positive educational effects for future citizens.

In Georgia, access to education for all Georgians is crucial to the economic growth of the state. Developmental education is a vital part of the continued success and expansion of the workforce in the state. In an article in the 1988 edition of the *Economic Review*, King and Avery noted the context of importance of developmental education. They stated,

Improved education and training at all ages and levels will be necessary to lift the quality of Georgia’s labor force. [They continued], “...future education must address training and retraining adults. Enhancing existing programs to train workers for specific jobs desired by entering and expanding industries as well as general skills training programs should help Georgia develop new industry, new firms, and plant expansion. At the same time, literacy training and remedial [developmental] education will improve the pool of entry level workers. (p. 30)

This study was conducted in the Southwest Georgia city of Albany. Albany is the region's center for industry, retail, and finance. This would be wonderful if it were not for the fact that "twenty one of Georgia's 71 poorest counties are in this region" (Lightsey, 2001, p. 97). This region of the state is also one of the top ten poorest congressional districts in the nation. Using service learning in concert with developmental reading courses will increase the value of learning for the often over looked and left behind, marginally prepared students. In college these students are awarded institutional credit for taking developmental education courses. Institutional credit does not count towards graduation, but the credit should count for something of value to students and society.

I contend that these courses should be used to plant the seeds of transformation for raising critical consciousness. Service learning experiences will help the community and underprepared students simultaneously. It is my assertion that everyone deserves an opportunity to make a better life for themselves through education. This is an experiential approach to teaching that could spawn relationships that will foster a greater understanding of difference and student development. Richardson (2006) asserts that "it focuses equally on student growth and community problem solving..." (p.39). The use of programs such as these adds great value to students academic careers. Hence, underprepared college students would benefit greatly from the integration of service learning into the developmental education curriculum. Finally, I believe that it is my duty as an educator to inspire students to help others and appreciate differences as they climb the ladder of literacy.

Research Questions

The general research question advanced in this study is:

- How does service learning in teacher education help cultivate cultural workers for the future?

The specific research questions are:

- Does exposing pre-service teachers to others from diverse backgrounds, through service learning, raise their level of critical consciousness?
- Does the use of service learning with pre-service teachers transform them into cultural workers?
- Does the use of service learning with pre-service teachers have the potential to transform them into culturally conscious teachers?

Autobiographical Roots

As I began to ponder my autobiographical roots for this research, I realized that I did not recall reading a first hand account of an educator that dedicated their life's work to laboring with students who might otherwise be dismissed or forgotten. With this thought in mind, this research solidified my resolve to continue to transform the curriculum. This is my story, and I am the only person who can tell it.

My desire to study the use of service learning in developmental reading rises professionally from my 8 years of experience teaching developmental reading at Darton College and 5 years of teaching elementary school. Personally, I have always been an avid reader. One of my most cherished childhood memories is of my father and me reading outside during summer break. I vividly recall sitting in the backyard with my father reading books under the trees. One summer, he was reading Alex Haley's, "*Roots*" while I was reading Betty Smith's "*A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*." Infrequently, he would look at me and ask, "How's the story going?" At which point I would begin to tell him

details about the plot and the characters. Later, I would ask him about his story, and he in turn would tell me about the adventure that he was reading. Both of us were reading different texts but enjoying the same pleasure, reading. Reading has a way of enabling readers to transcend their current state of being to travel to the location of the story. It is this feeling of transcendence that I share with students when I preview a story in class.

Professionally, at the beginning of my career in the academy I was happy to teach others to read and pleased when they exited the course. As time passed, I began to feel trapped in a web of ever changing rules and state policies regarding teaching developmental education courses. It troubled me that my students did not receive college credit for taking the courses that I taught. These courses are important at least in my mind, because they create a means to provide access to education for students that have been out of school for an extended period of time, marginalized, or left behind in the K-12 system.

While these thoughts were forming in my mind, developmental education programs were being closed on university campuses across the state of Georgia. This led me to question what I was doing on a daily basis. Am I teaching in the right area? Who did it serve to close developmental education programs? Who benefits from marginally prepared citizens? Is this a move to limit access? Why are developmental education programs undervalued in the university system? As a novice professor honing my skills, I was constantly searching for ways to improve and understand. According to Freire (1988), "Teaching requires constant preparation and development on the part of teachers, as is made clearer and clearer by their teaching experience, if well lived and apprehended"(p. 18). So, I decided to go back to school to find the answers to my

questions because education has always been a panacea for my pain and confusion.

I enjoyed teaching students to read critically and find meaning, but outside of the classroom, I felt like I was drowning in a sea of uncertainty. I did not realize that the constrained feeling that I was having was a by product of oppression until I was thrown a lifesaver: the doctoral program at Georgia Southern University. Prior to the doctoral program, I had not considered the total impact that oppression has on the lives of my students or mine. “Perpetually disguised power has exerted its influences so subtly that most of us are unaware of the oppression in our lives” (Kincheloe, 2002, p. 36). The expert uses of texts, and teaching methods, in this doctoral program, have awakened my consciousness. I have been armed with the knowledge and skills that empower me to use the curriculum to make a positive transformation for the betterment of society. I have also learned that many people that become aware of the influence that oppression has on their lives never do anything about it (p.77). I, on the other hand, intend to use this information to search for ways to enhance my teaching, move into a different phase of education, and add to the discourse of curriculum understanding.

As time progresses, I realize that I am not only teaching reading, I am imparting to my students the skill that is at the foundation of liberation and the core of freedom and democracy. Being literate is one of the many accoutrements of power; therefore, I contend that literacy is the foundation of freedom. Literacy is used as the yard stick for many predictors of the future. For example, in 1997, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) predicted that by the end of the 20th century, 885 million of the world’s adults would be illiterate and women make up two-thirds of that population (UNESCO, 1997). The notation concerning women is

particularly important because mothers are the first teachers of children and therefore exert a great deal of influence on their success. The National Institute for Literacy espouses that the greatest predictor of a child's future success is the literacy level of the child's mother (NIFL, 2004). These are just two examples that support my assertion that literacy is a part of the core of freedom.

While researching facts on literacy, I began to postulate. Where do I go from here? What can I do to help my students? How can I affect a change for the better? I began my quest by going to the source: my students. I polled my students in a journal assignment. The assignment asked the students to explain to me why they did or did not like reading. The results yielded many answers but the overwhelming similarity was that all of the students had some type of traumatic episode of embarrassment in relation to their inability to read fluently. Many shared narratives of being yelled at in front of their peers in class either at school or in Sunday school. At this point, I set out to allay their fears and help them find a way to like reading.

I responded to this problem by adding a volunteer project to my READ 0099 courses. All students were required to complete three oral community readings at a local community site. I theorized that if they had to read to a group, large or small, they would have to find something that they liked. As the semester progressed, I taught them the skills (main ideas, inferences, etc.) necessary for them to succeed on the state exit exam (COMPASS). Students volunteered as community readers in public and private schools in Albany as well as nursing homes and the Boys and Girls Club. Each visit was followed by submitting a reflective journal on the experience and a classroom debriefing. The

journal entries revealed the good feeling of sharing reading with others. The by-product of this project was that the interaction with others helped raise the students' self-esteem.

The classroom debriefing was not as positive as the journal entries. During the dialogue, I discovered that I had missed a key piece, cultural awareness. I verbally polled my students about their interaction with people of other ethnic groups, during their project, and I discovered that they had limited experiences and were lacking in the area of cultural awareness and empathy for others.

Again, I began to postulate. What did I do wrong? How can I correct this problem? I started a new research process to find a better way of combining community and academic. I re-read John Dewey's books entitled, *Freedom and Culture* (1989) and *Experience and Education* (1938). John Dewey (1989) cited that, "the ways of interaction between human nature and cultural conditions are the first and fundamental thing to be examined, and that the problem is to ascertain the effects of interactions between different components of different human beings and different customs rules traditions and institutions"(p.39). This quote led me to conduct a literature search, and I found the answer to many of my questions. Service learning was the tool that I needed to help my students and transform the curriculum of developmental education. For me, this was a revelation. Throughout my career, academic and professional, I have sought a place to make a difference and have a significant impact on education. I have sought a place to soar. This is my line of flight (Reynolds, 2004).

Theoretical Framework

Because of the complexity of service learning the proposed theoretical framework for my dissertation will be informed by the work of four theorists: John Dewey, Paulo

Friere, Anna Julia Cooper, and W.E.B. Dubois. It is necessary to use these four theorists in concert because together their collective works provide the foundation for discussing the subject of using service learning to raise consciousness. The work of John Dewey and Paulo Friere are the primary theorist of this framework. They will be supported by the work of Anna Julia Cooper and W.E.B. DuBois.

Service learning is a pedagogy that is rooted in the progressive, pragmatic, constructivist notion of education championed by John Dewey, William Kilpatrick, and more recently Janet Eyler and Dwight Giles (Sheffield, 2004). Dewey's work is utilized to provide a link between experiential learning and service learning. In addition, Dewey's philosophical work with consciousness and democracy in education. Freire's work is used because of his work with developing literacy techniques for marginalized groups, the freedom that literacy instruction unleashes and consciousness. Cooper's work is used because of her humanitarian contribution to serving others as an African American Female scholar and consciousness. The work of W.E.B. DuBois was used because of his work in the area of education as a practice of freedom and consciousness.

All of the aforementioned theorists' writing displays a reoccurring theme of consciousness through different lenses of understanding. In this discussion of the literature, I will first discuss the contributions of each individual theorist as it relates to the theoretical framework of this study. Second, I will discuss their various influences in each of the major bodies of literature.

John Dewey

John Dewey is the primary theorist of the theoretical framework for this study. Dewey was a proponent in reflective thinking, and reflection is an integral part of the

service learning experience. All of the literature points to the fact that Dewey held that reflective thinking gave experience educative value. John Dewey's thoughts on reflective thinking established five phases. The phases of Dewey's theory are suggestions (mind devises various solutions), intellectualization (debating the difficulty of the level of the problem), hypothesis (mental collection of thoughts), reasoning (weighing the options), and testing the hypothesis in action (executing the mental decision) (Dewey, 1933).

Because of Dewey's influence, other theorists have developed frameworks that are applicable to service learning. David Kolb (1984) developed the Kolb Cycle. Kolb espoused that learners need to be engaged in four stages of learning: concrete experience (feeling), reflective observation (silently watching), abstract conceptualization (thinking), and active experimentation (doing). Eyler, Giles, and Schmiede (1996) developed the "four C's of reflection" method: continuous reflection (before and after thoughts), connected reflection (service assignment and classroom link), challenging reflection (instructors pose questions about issues), and contextualized reflection (appropriate setting and context for service). This framework was developed as a result of a study conducted by the authors. They stated, "After analyzing our interview data, we reflected on the common themes or principles that were present across all of the forms of reflection reported by the students we interviewed. From this process emerged the four C's of reflection analysis" (Eyler, Giles, and Schmiede 1996, p. 46). I have used this method with students in the past. This method helps practitioners ensure meaningful reflective experiences for students. All of these frameworks show the far reaching influence of Dewey's work on service learning and specifically reflective thought. Additional writings by Dewey have also contributed to the area.

Dewey endeavored to give meaning to experience in his book *Experience and Education* (1938). He stressed the need for hands on experiences to widen students' knowledge of the world because he realized that a new social order was on the horizon. Dewey wrote, "looking ahead to a new movement in education, adapted to the existing need for a new social order..." (p. vi). The educational anomaly of pre-service teachers beginning their academic careers in developmental education courses is not new, but it is an area that has not been explored. This is a gap in the research. I want to research this gap while working towards the new social order that Dewey references. I believe that service learning will give students much needed first-hand experience so that they will be ready for the new social movement. Boud and Miller (1996) noted that experiential learning is an important approach in the theoretical of adult education. Experiential learning places great value on the collective learning that is acquired by the individuals through their lived experience. I believe that the experiential learning described by Dewey is a form of consciousness that seeks to find meaning in everyday tasks and human interaction.

Dewey's philosophy of education has had an effect on many, for example Myles Horton, founder of the Highlander Folk School. Horton dedicated his life to working with the poor of Appalachian Region, civil rights, and raising consciousness. Dewey corresponded with him through letters that are in the archives of the Social Action Collection that is a part of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin today (Adams, 1975). Dewey's work also had a profound effect on the work of Paulo Freire. Freire dedicated his life's work to stamping out illiteracy in adult education. Both men were influenced by Dewey: one from Brazil the other the United States. They each

championed the cause of the less fortunate through the vehicle of education for change and raising consciousness. These two followers of Dewey co-authored a book entitled, *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change* (1991). In the book they discuss in a dialogic format, literacy, education for social change and the empowerment of marginalized people.

John Dewey's work in this area laid the foundation for service learning. His embracing of community as a place for social development is quite evident in his work. In the book, *School and Society* (1900), Dewey stated , “ ... helping others, instead of being a form of charity which impoverishes the recipient, is simply an aide in setting free the powers and furthering the impulse of the one helped”(p. 76). This idea was the forerunner for the current discussion on empowerment and civic responsibility.

Paulo Friere

Literacy is the key that unlocks the door to the American dream of freedom and equality. Paulo Freire's vision of literacy education involves not only reading the word, but reading the world (Freire, 1973). He believed in making the experience of literacy “real” to the masses by identifying with their world and their lived experiences. He obtained this knowledge by listening to people. Freire (1988) asserts “Listening to all that come to us, regardless of their intellectual level, is a human duty and reveals identification with democracy and not with elitism” (p.32). Using experience and consciousness to make reading come alive is the reason that Freire's work is vital to this study. Further, he is a part of the theoretical framework of this study because of his views on teacher education and raising consciousness.

Freire (1987) stated that “consciousness is generated through the social practice [in] which [we] participate” (p.35). I believe that service learning reflection will create a link between what students have read in the classroom and what they have experienced at the service site. Service learning is a perfect literacy tool because it reinforces the dichotomous relationship between writing and reading. Freire (1988, p.24) posits, “One of the mistakes we often make is to dichotomize reading and writing and, even from... [the] earliest steps in the practice of reading and writing, to conceive of these processes as detached from the general process of knowing. This dichotomy between reading and writing follows us forever as students and as teachers.” Service learning combined with reading is the tool that can accomplish the mission of bring reading and writing together while raising the consciousness of students that are marginalized in the academy.

Paulo Friere espoused that this is a different process than raising ones conscious awareness, this process helps oppressed people break thorough myths that have been perpetuated by the dominate culture (Freire, 1973). Freire had a theory that asserted that the liberation of oppressed people rests with the literacy rate. This theory is another factor that ignites my passion for teach reading.

In the book *Literacy* (1987), Freire examines four approaches to reading instruction: academic, utilitarian, cognitive development, and romantic. The students in remedial reading courses have been taught using one of these methods or a combination of these methods.

The academic approach “ignores the life experience, the history, and the language practice of students (1987, p.146). Further, “it overemphasizes the mastery and understanding of classical literature...” According to Freire (1987), the utilitarian

approach to literacy “is to produce readers who meet the basic reading requirements of contemporary society” (p.146). The cognitive development approach takes as a view that reading is a process (p.148). This process makes a provision for students to discuss and analyze issues raised from reading the text. This approach sounds fascinating but Freire posits, “Since students’ cultural capital—i.e., their life experience, history, and language—is ignored, they are rarely able to engage in thorough critical reflection, regarding their own practical experience ...” Freire’s definition of the romantic approach involves “meaning as being generated by the reader and not occurring in the interaction between reader and author via text” (p.148). This section of the book culminates with a conclusion from Freire concerning a commonality of all of the approaches. “They all ignore the role of language as a major force in the construction of human subjectivities” (p.149). Placing students in service learning activities will expand students knowledge of their future students colloquial English. This experience will help them understand the way that students of various cultures use the language to make meaning.

Anna Julia Cooper

Most of Anna Julia Cooper’s life, she was so busy educating the underprivileged that she did not create a prolific writing career in terms of books. She wrote a number of essays instead. Like many of the instructors that teach developmental education courses, she did the work that no one else was willing to do (Tougas, 2000, p. 23). Her major literary contribution was the book, *A Voice from the South* (1892). Her life was framed by two distinct events in American History: the end of the civil war and the height of the civil rights movement. This is important because it framed the flow of her ideas as well as their acceptance.

In the person of Anna Julia Cooper, I see one of the challenges faced by service learning practitioners. The challenge is that of working in an area that colleagues carelessly question and sometimes disregard. Cooper once wrote in a college questionnaire in 1932 that her chief cultural interest was the “education of the underprivileged” (Tougas, 2000). Further evidence of her commitment to the underprivileged lies in her activity with the Colored Women’s Club movement. She gave the group the motto: “Lift as we climb.” As a third generation member of that movement, I can testify that we continue to recite that motto today at every meeting. It is the mantra that we use to propel us to continue to help others as we succeed in the world. Currently, my mother, and I are active members and officers in the organization. My daughter is a local and state officer in the youth affiliate of the organization. Service to the community is our mission. This adds to the significance of the inclusion of Anna Julia Cooper in my theoretical framework as well as her university work with under prepared students.

Anna Julia Cooper addressed a different type of consciousness in her book,” *A Voice from the South*” (Cooper, 1892). She discussed a triple consciousness of being a woman, economically independent, and African American. The fuel that this type of consciousness provides gave Cooper the strength to work towards doctorate degree at the Sorbonne in Paris, France. At the age of 65, she became the fourth African American woman to obtain a Ph.D. (Lemert, 1998). This form of consciousness is still in existence today. Pre-service teachers will see the evidence of this form of consciousness in parents and sometimes the students that they work with on a daily basis. Without prior exposure to it they will not be able to recognize or identify it properly. Nor address it with the understanding and respect that it demands.

W.E.B. DuBois

W.E.B. DuBois addressed another type of consciousness. DuBois discussed consciousness in terms of race and nationality. He writes, “The problem of problems is nothing more than democracy beating itself helplessly against the color bar...” (1920, p.33). The sentiment that he espoused during the 1920s can be applied to other minorities during this tumultuous time in our nation’s history. His writing discusses the double consciousness of being Black and American (DuBois, 1969). Gloria Ladson Billings recounted similar events that surrounded her life during the civil rights movement. She stated, “It was a time of fear and terror, but paradoxically it was a time of hope and social transformation. I was learning that African Americans could work together to form a social movement that could transform the nation and force it to live up to its democratic promise for all of its citizens” (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Currently, the events of September 11, 2001, have raised the issue of this type of consciousness. This kind of consciousness was also discussed by He and Phillion. He and Phillion (2002) stated that, “As we continue to experience the aftermath of September 11, 2001 we realize that issues of multiculturalism, difference, relationship, respect and understanding ...will become a greater challenge as the world landscape is continuously fluctuating.” These words have become more than a whisper in eternity because their prediction is coming to fruition. Everyone is now expected to stand up, stick out their chest, and proclaim, “I am an American.” I contend that it is great for everyone to have a sense of nationalism, but I recognize that there is an inner fight within those that have been marginalized within the boundaries of this country.

Oppressed groups are not willing to be occasionally recognized as Americans when it serves the purpose of the mainstream. This is especially true for oppressed groups if they continue to be locked out of the American dream of freedom and equality. In my experience, I have listened to many students express the idea of feeling locked out of their major when they succeed in passing the course work and fail the state exit exam (COMPASS).

Through the literature of the aforementioned theorists, I have found kindred spirits on my fledging journey into inquiry. Dewey's influence on the lives of Paulo Freire and Myles Horton has left a legacy of hope, understanding, and raising consciousness for the marginalized of the world. The discovery of conversations between Jane Addams and Myles Horton has been an added bonus. Finding out that John Dewey, Anna Julia Cooper, and W.E.B. DuBois held similar views towards vocational education was another exhilarating revelation. All of these connections remind me that the participation of all is necessary to discharge the curriculum. This is why I have chosen to use a research method that promotes a democratic process, a participatory form of inquiry-community based narrative inquiry. According to Stringer (1996), participatory inquiry methods seek collaborative inquiry from all participants while engaging in sustained change in organizational, community, or institutional context. The combination of teaching skills, shared information, helping others, and reflective journaling promotes a unique environment for both the students and the teacher. Researching this theoretical framework has yielded unexpected revelations. It is amazing to me the effect that one's life can have on others. I feel as though I am uncovering a story of sort. A soap opera of hope, freedom, service and the determination to make a difference in the world.

Methodology

The research for this study is grounded in my theoretical framework. The framework for the dissertation is informed by the work of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Anna Julia Cooper, and W.E.B. DuBois. These theorists contribute to the conversation of creating cultural workers for the future through the raising of critical consciousness. My definition of a cultural worker in regards to pre-service teachers is one that does not trample on others way of existing in the world. Instead, a cultural worker would embrace others differences armed with the knowledge that when we accept others for who they are rather than what we want them to be, we all benefit. Therefore, this type of teacher would potentially be open to accepting, acknowledging, empowering, and validating any student from any background that walks into the classroom. They would realize that our differences make us stronger not less than the mainstream.

Participants

My research focused upon five pre-service teachers enrolled in a developmental reading course during Fall 2004. Each of the participants is currently enrolled at the college. They were chosen based upon their, major, previously being enrolled in developmental reading, and willingness to participate in the study. I interviewed them about their prior service learning experiences and as well as beginning their academic career in developmental education. I also interviewed them about their experiences at the site. This study was designed to discover their observations, feelings about service, and cultural biases. In addition, this study uncovers their current views about reading.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may serve as a catalyst for change in practice in developmental education in Georgia and the nation. Remediation in postsecondary curricula is a contentious issue and the focus of policy related literature and the media (Saxon, 2001). “Inadequate high school preparation is compounded by poor alignment between high schools and colleges, which often creates an “expectations gap” between what colleges require and what high schools produce (Spellings, 2006, p.7).” Nationally, in fall 2000, 28% of all enrolled college freshmen were in at least one developmental education course. On many campuses, 22% took developmental education courses in math, 14% in writing, and 11% in reading (NCES, 2000). In 2003, McCabe noted that only half of the students enrolled in developmental education courses complete the program.

Additionally, a 2005 collaborative study entitled, “The Governance Divide: A Four State Study on Improving College Readiness and Success,” mentioned that 40% of 4-year-college students and 63% of two-year-college students end up taking at least one remedial course. The study was conducted by the Institute for Educational Leadership, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, and the Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research. The four state case studies concerned Florida, Georgia, New York, and Oregon. The cost of these courses has skyrocketed. It is estimated at a cost of \$1 billion dollars to the taxpayers (Breneman, 2006). These facts and statistics make an increasing number of education professionals question whether academically underprepared students belong in higher education. Students’ increasing need for developmental education courses has not gone unnoticed. This issue has revived the

blame game in education. Universities and colleges blame the high schools, the high schools blame the middle schools, and the middle schools blame the elementary schools for ill-prepared students (Ponessea, 1996). For example, in an article in *National Cross Talk* (1999), a publication of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, an actual account concerning a student was recounted. Cumming writes

Despite the fact that his full tuition is paid by Georgia's lottery-funded HOPE scholarship program (a popular entitlement for all in-state undergraduates with a B or better average in academic subjects), Austin is ill-prepared for college level work. After doggedly taking the Scholastic Assessment Test (AT) five times, along with two SAT-prep classes, he scored no better than a combined 800 out of 1600. His score on the verbal section—350 out of 800—was especially troubling, forcing him into a remedial reading course at Savannah State.

Sadly, it is not an unusual occurrence for former high school honor students to be found in remedial or developmental education courses. Perrin (2002) reports that “ineffective high school education added to increasing ethnic and linguistic diversity are combining to make developmental education critically important...” (p. 3). In Georgia, an effort to stop the finger pointing has caused policy makers to revamp Georgia state school standards. This initiative is known as P-16. With these changes, more accountability and job intensification have been levied on teachers.

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia approved in 1996 to reduce the number of freshman in remedial studies annually by 5%. The policy also enacted a rule that stated that by the year 2001, traditional freshmen needing remedial

studies would not be able to enroll at any 4-year institution in the state (Hebel, 1999). Instead, they are required to attend a 2-year nontechnical college.

Today, because of this policy, enrollment on Georgia's 2-year college campuses is at an all time high. This is not an uncommon phenomena. "America's community colleges, whose enrollments have been growing significantly, have provided a place to begin for many of these students. In some states, however, community colleges are reaching their capacity limits, a cause for deep concern (Spellings, 2006, p.8)." Locally, since the fall of 1999, the enrollment at Darton College has risen from 2,674 to 4,600 during the fall of 2006 (Darton, 2006). During fall 2005, out of 4,600 students, approximately 1,350 are enrolled in developmental courses (F. Carr, personal communication, October 26, 2005).

By conducting this study with my students, I can show instructors and administrators of developmental education programs a new tool for added value and potential success. Additionally, this study seeks to make a difference by using service learning to explore raising the critical consciousness of pre-service teachers. This dissertation has the potential to aid them in the areas of empowerment, social justice, and transformation.

Outline of the Dissertation

This work consists of five chapters: An introduction, a review of literature, the methodology, the data presentation and the findings. Chapter one includes my teaching experiences on the path to using service learning as a tool. In addition, chapter one delineates why I believe that it is important to use service learning in developmental education with pre-service teachers. Chapter two lays out the theoretical framework for

this research. Chapter two also reviews selected works of John Dewey, Paulo Friere, Anna Julia Cooper, and W.E.B. Dubois in the context of using service learning to raise consciousness. Chapter three discusses the method of inquiry for this research. In addition, this chapter includes the college portraiture, outlines the method used for participant selection and participant profile. In chapter three, the explanation of the types of data collected is discussed. Chapter four presents the stories collected from student interviews and my journal. The narrative form of participant interviews is a part of this chapter. Finally, chapter five concludes the study and discusses the findings of this research. The chapter concludes with an update concerning the participants.

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

Mahatma Ghandi

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This dissertation explores the use and potential benefits of using service learning with pre-service teacher education students previously enrolled in a developmental reading course in a Southwest Georgia college. Specifically, the research investigates whether students’ perceptions towards ethnicity and social problems raises their consciousness as a result of participating in service learning. The participants will share their expectations prior to going to the service site and their reflections after the experience. This chapter presents research and theory on the use of service learning in developmental education. As I demonstrated in the first chapter, my study relies heavily on my theoretical framework which is composed of the work of four theorists: John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Anna Julia Cooper, and W.E.B. DuBois.

Through the review of literature, I have established a framework for using service learning in developmental education to explore the history and trace the development of service learning, to establish a link between the reconceptualization and service learning, to explore the definition and history of developmental education in Georgia, to discuss pre-service teachers in developmental education courses, to investigate the connection between John Dewey’s work and service learning, and to examine the works of Paulo Friere, John Dewey, Anna Julia Cooper, and W.E.B. Dubois for a link concerning raising consciousness. This chapter represents an examination and review of seven major bodies of literature: (a) service learning, (b) the reconceptualization, (c) developmental

education, (d) raising consciousness, (e) building community, (f) social justice, and (g) transformation.

Service Learning

Definitions of Service Learning

The term, “service learning,” grew from the work of Robert Sigmon and William Ramsey in 1967 while working at the Southern Regional Education Board (Staunton, Giles, Cruz, 1999). As far as a consistent definition of service learning is concerned, at this time, one does not exist. Kraft (1996) noted that efforts to define service learning have yielded multiple lists of general features which have not necessarily overlapped. This continues to be an ongoing issue in the area that has not been resolved.

As a result, the definitions of service learning are many and varied. For example, the American Association of Community Colleges defines service learning as the combination of community service and classroom instruction with a focus on critical, reflective thinking as well as personal and civic responsibility (Gottlieb & Robinson, 2002). In contrast, an article by Checkoway (1996) featured in *Phi Delta Kappan* defined service learning as activities that combine classroom work with social action and service in order to promote development of students’ subject matter knowledge, practical skills, social responsibility and civic values.

Many educational entities have adopted definitions which resemble Checkoway’s definition. For instance, the University of Georgia defines service learning as being, “[a] philosophy and methodology involving the application of academic skills to address or solve real-life needs and problems in the community” (UGA, 2007). The International

Partnership for Service Learning espouses that, “[s]ervice learning is a pedagogy that links academic study with the practical experience of community service” (IPSL, 2007).

According to The National Service Learning Clearinghouse service learning is still evolving and a shared vocabulary, a set of common ideas and theories, and a generally accepted approach to validation has not been determined (NSLC, 2005).

Through research and review of related literature, I discovered that in 1990, Kendall (1990) stated that there were over 147 definitions for service learning. Today, the count continues to grow. As of 2003, more than 200 definitions service learning are found throughout published literature (Furco, 2003). Sheffield (2005) addressed the matter of multiple definitions as being “over-defined” (p.47). He stated, “[t]here simply are too many definitions of what constitutes the service-learning pedagogy—definitions that are all accepted as valid by the service learning community” (p.48). I understand Sheffield’s passionate argument against numerous definitions in the area. I believe that the many and varied ways of viewing service learning are a direct link to the reconceptualization of curriculum. Seeking to understand from different perspectives and extending an opportunity for all to be explored as well as understood is a part of the foundation of both areas. I reason that because of the difference in communities and the newness of the formal implementation of service learning, each project requires a modification to the definition. Therefore, no matter which definition of service learning is used, the core concept is the same: the use of academic learning objectives combined with service objectives. Defining service learning is the first step in understanding its foundation.

The History of Service Learning

The use of service learning is becoming more widespread with the passing of each academic year with many practitioners using service learning without knowing its origin. The practice of service learning dates back further than the establishment of the term itself. The search for understanding any pedagogical strategy dictates that its foundation or history must be explored. Therefore, I will construct the history of service learning through the exploration of the pivotal moments in history that impacted what we know today as service learning.

Long before the discussion on service learning began, De Tocqueville (1961) completed a nineteenth century study on American society. In this study, he noted that the formation of volunteer associations for community concerns seems to be what had propelled the American society forward in light speed fashion. I found this to be an interesting notation because while researching service learning history, I discovered that much like the many varied definitions of the term there are differing versions of service learning history. For the purpose of this dissertation, I will construct a chronological history of the events and ideas that contributed to service learning.

John Dewey's work in the Chicago lab school laid the intellectual foundation of service learning. This experience is chronicled in detail in the book, *The School and Society* (1900). Dewey stressed the relationship of student experience, learning and critical reflection. He also envisioned people coming together to communicate over conflicts in the community.

In 1910, Williams James (1910) wrote an essay entitled, *The Moral Equivalent of War*. In this essay, James outlined his vision of nonmilitary national service. This was

significant because the essay documents an early example of the idea of using national service. Like Dewey, James believed in experience and communications as teaching tools. James wrote, "...instead of military conscription, a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of years a part of the army enlistee against Nature, the injustice would tend to be evened out and numerous other goods of the Commonwealth would follow" (James, 1910 p.4).

In 1931, Myles Horton founded the Highlander Folk School. Highlander is one of the premier adult education institutions in the United States. It began as adult education school that championed labor struggles for Southern workers and civil rights as well as justice for African Americans (Adams, 1975). Embracing diversity is necessary for service learning to persist. Highlander's efforts helped breakdown barrier to diversity during a time in American History when it was not popular to include all ethnicities in education. The school was a remarkable idea because they taught everyone, regardless of race, in the same classroom during a time in the American South when this practice was not the norm.

In 1933, the establishment of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was created by Franklin D. Roosevelt as a part of the "New Deal" (Janowitz, 1983). This program gave thousands of young men service terms of 6-8 months to assist with the restoration of the national parks system. Dewey and James' ideas of using experience and communications as a teaching tool were used in a unique way. President Roosevelt believed that CCC enrollees would become more employable and better citizen through the training and education they received in the camps. The CCC is an early example of service learning in America.

In 1961, President Kennedy established the Peace Corps. The mission of the Peace Corps is to share with the world America's people, its most prized resource. This initiative opened the door for viewing service in a new way. The participants range in age from college freshman to retirees. Their service assignments are in developing countries across the world (Peace Corps, 2006). Participants' educational expertise was used to promote the United States as goodwill ambassadors on an international level through service to humanity.

President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The act created Volunteers in Service to America better known as VISTA (VISTA, 2006). The programs commenced the following year with over 2000 members working in Connecticut, California, and the Appalachian Region.

At the close of the decade, in 1969, the Atlanta Service Learning Conference was held in Atlanta, Georgia. This conference was sponsored by the City of Atlanta, Urban Corps, Peace Corps, VISTA, the Southern Regional Education Board, and the Department of Health Education and Welfare (NSLC, 2006). As a result of the conference, the Southern Regional Education Board defined service learning as the integration of the accomplishment of the tasks that meet human needs with conscious educational growth. This was one of the first formal attempts to define the engagement between education and community (Titlebaum, 2004).

The year 1971 was an eventful year in service learning history. The National Student Volunteer Program was established. This name would later be changed in 1979 to The National Center for Service-Learning. The name change was made in support of service learning and its efforts toward improved student learning through service. The

National Society for Experiential Education was also founded during this year. This organization serves as a national resource center for the development and improvement of experiential education throughout the nation. The tenets that it supports are learning through intellectual development, cross-cultural and global awareness, civic and social responsibility, and ethical development (NSEE, 2006).

In 1985, the National Campus Compact was formed by the presidents of Stanford University, Georgetown University, Brown University, and the Education Commission of States. The organization formed a coalition of college and university presidents whose main purpose was to facilitate student development in the area of community service (Service Learning History, 2006).

According to the United States Department of Education (1990), the national education goals set by the President and Governors at the 1989 Summit in Charlottesville, Virginia includes the following objective: “All students will be involved in activities that promote and demonstrate good citizenship, community service, and personal responsibility”. It is my belief that the inclusion of this objective laid the groundwork for the creation of funding to facilitate this goal. Many communities have benefited from activities that have been conducted to meet this objective. During this same year, President George Bush created the office of National Service and the Points of Light Foundation (Points of Light, 2006). Both organizations support long term, committed service to the community. These organizations provide opportunities for students and citizens of all age groups to meet the objective set forth during the 1989 Summit at Charlottesville, Virginia.

The National Community Service Act of 1990 was signed on November 16, 1990. This act authorized several programs to involve citizens in the fight against illiteracy and poverty. For example, this act created the non-profit Points of Light Foundation which administers programs to encourage citizens to volunteer in order to solve critical social issues. This act also provided for the Job Training Partnership and the Youth Conservation Corps. In addition, this act gave the authorization to enhance work force skills and basic educational skills (NSLC, 2006). Many state policy makers took note of the tenets of the act. This observation caused lawmakers into offering many state and local grants were developed for community service and service learning after this act was passed.

In 1992, Maryland became the first state in the union to require a service learning activity as a condition of graduation from high school. The policy was put into effect during the 1993-94 school year and was implemented in all Maryland school districts (NCLC, 2006). The year 1993 was also the year the Association of Supervision and Curriculum endorsed the use of linking service with learning (Service Learning History, 2006). This occurrence was significant because this endorsement was an attempt to formalize the use of service learning within the curriculum field.

In 1994, the Invisible College was founded. Today, the group is known as Educators for Community Engagement (ECE). The group's first organizational meeting took place at the Highlander Center (a.k.a. Highlander Folk School) (Service Learning History, 2006). The organization's name change became official in 2002. The group is comprised of dedicated educators that believe in the practice of using the tool of service learning to effect a change for the greater good. This organization's emergence gave

instructors of higher education a formalized vehicle for researching pedagogy and community relationship dynamics in the area of service learning.

The year 1994 was the year that the King Holiday was officially transformed into a day of service. President William Clinton signed the King Holiday and Service Act (King Center, 2006). This act gave citizens the opportunity to serve their fellowman in some capacity during the holiday. This act has forever linked the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with volunteerism and a commitment to serve.

This historical review of service learning demonstrates that this area is filled with pivotal moments that impacted our society on at all levels: locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. Service learning is inextricably linked with helping others through service. This creates a possibility of a chain reaction of good deeds that eventually touches everyone on some level. Orr (1994) stated “Those being educated today will have to do what we the present generation has not been able to do, stabilize the world” (p. 55). We can dispel myths and misunderstandings before they get started by teaching tolerance, sensitivity, and enlightenment. My praise of service learning does not negate the fact that it has received some criticisms. Every teaching technique must be examined from all sides.

Criticisms of Service Learning

Eyler and Giles (n.d.) explored service learning in an article entitled, *The Theoretical Roots of Service-Learning in John Dewey: Toward a Theory of Service-Learning*. They posit that the lack of “theorizing in service learning...represents a kind of intellectualism that is long on concrete action and practice and short on theory” (reference). In addition, they assert that, “Service Learning as a relatively new social and

educational phenomenon suffers from the lack of a well articulated conceptual framework (n.d.). In further researching the area of service learning, I have found additional criticisms. For the purpose of this study, the position of service learning in education, lack of scholarship, little acknowledgement of spirituality, and nonscholarly practitioners will be examined as criticisms of service learning.

The first criticism is the acknowledgement of whether service learning is a social movement or a field of study. This criticism has led me on a quest for understanding and clarification. I assert that the varieties of definitions of service learning are the result of practitioners' efforts to create a community of acceptable definitions for the pedagogy of the service learning. Service learning has many definitions that vary on the same theme of academics coupled with service to the community. Hence service learning is a reconceptualized area of understanding and making a difference.

Second, service learning has been given the name "fluff" because of the lack of scholarship in the area (Markus, Howard, King, 1993). Much of the research that I have examined is comprised of one time quantitative or ethnographic studies. Longitudinal studies were virtually non existent. I attribute this to the fact that service learning is a relatively young area of scholarly research. This could also be attributed to the perception of service learning being a form of experiential learning; it may not be viewed a serious area of research. In contrast to this finding, many major universities are now requiring service learning courses. Providence College, Portland State University, and Rutgers University have made participation in service learning a requirement for baccalaureate graduation (Reardon, 1998).

The third criticism of service learning is relatively new involving the lack of the acknowledgement of spirituality in service learning reflection. Koth (2003) noted that the lack of reference to spirituality in service learning reflection is a missed opportunity to foster deeper contemplative practices among students. I believe that the action of changing ones activities results in an inner change. The acknowledgement of spiritual change can only be relayed by the participants. This brings to the forefront, the issue of what constitutes spirituality. Everyone has a different definition of spirituality. Many link spirituality with organized religion. This makes the inclusion of spirituality a difficult task. I have not found a way of documenting this type of change without the participants' response. This may be why the issue of faith has not been addressed on a widespread basis in previous dissertation studies.

The fourth major criticism of service learning concerns its practitioners. Those that practice service learning pedagogy have been accused of being more action oriented than scholarship oriented (Howard, 1993). Thus, most of the articles in the area detail programs rather than theory. Reardon (1998) observed that an increasing number of colleges and universities are recognizing the scholarly benefits of having faculty incorporate service learning into their research. Authors Canada and Speck (2001) noted in *Developing and implementing Service-Learning Programs*, that on campuses where faculty are rewarded for innovative teaching practices, service learning had a better chance of flourishing. In contrast, they found that on campuses where scholarship was the major focus of the faculty reward system, service learning was not acknowledged as a legitimate scholarly pursuit.

These are the four major criticisms of service learning: a true definition of the area, dearth of scholarship in the area, little acknowledgement of spirituality, and nonscholarly practitioners. As with any new idea, criticism is abundant. It is not pleasant, but criticism is a necessary evil to keep practitioners constantly searching for ways to improve. If upon examination, we find no need for improvement, at least we have addressed the criticism. I conclude that with service learning, the potential benefits exceed the criticisms.

Benefits of Service Learning

Both students and communities have the potential to benefit from networking relationships that are formed when students serve in various capacities. For example, a pre-service reading education major enrolled in a Teaching of Reading course would be paired with The Boys and Girls Club's after-school program to tutor students in reading. The professor of record would discuss the course objectives that pertain to the service site with the organization's director. This will prevent the student from being treated like a volunteer. Volunteers perform any task that is placed before them. Students involved in service learning perform only those tasks that relate to the curriculum of their academic course. The student would work at the service site for fifteen hours per semester. This activity would be beneficial to both parties involved.

I believe that this teaching tool, service learning, will help pre-service teachers understand how to maximize the use of community resources and create greater community partnerships between school systems and communities at large. If service learning is used as an instructional method of experiential learning, it could be conceptualized to show students how to effectively transfer the knowledge of the

classroom to real life. Minnich (1999) noted that experiential education is not about adding something on to education. It is a form of understanding the human condition in cooperation with individuals and groups.

Pre-service teachers must be aware of cultural differences in order to appreciate the richness that each child brings to the classroom. Jane Addams (1902) stated in *Democracy and Social Ethics*, “[w]e know instinctively that if we grow contemptuous of our fellows, and consciously limit our intercourse to certain kinds of people whom we have previously decided to respect we not only tremendously circumscribe our range of life, but limit the scope of our ethics” (p.10). Service learning moves pre-service teachers into areas outside their comfort zone. Serving others different from themselves gives them an opportunity to know and appreciate others in different walks of life.

If students are allowed to gain knowledge concerning oppression, they will realize that oppression is alive and well in the United States as well as globally. Americans are becoming increasingly oblivious to politics, even as they become increasingly sensitive to culture (Kincheloe, 2002). A humanized society requires cultural freedom, the ability of the individual to choose values and rules of conduct that violate conventional social norms. In addition a political and civil society requires the full participation of all of its inhabitants in every aspect of public life. People cannot raise themselves to bid for power unless their curiosity has been aroused (Freire, 1998). Curiosity is what leads us from theory to practice. Service learning is an extension of power because it allows students to move from the textbook to the real world prior to acquiring their own classrooms. It provides a platform for them to observe the obstacles that their future students will face.

This will give students time to reflect on ways to remove barriers to education for their future students.

The way to change students' praxis is through the introduction of new educational ideas and techniques into the curriculum. The intelligent exercise of power begins in the mind that has insight into the deeper structures of its actions (Hilsman, 1995). The experiences that students gain from service learning activities will empower them to become reflective agents of change. Daloz (1986) stated that problem solving situations enhance creativity and stimulates student reflection thereby making learning relevant. Through service learning, students will develop the capacity to evaluate their own reasoning. This capacity to reason about ones own thought is self-consciousness (Readings, 1996). Therefore, to make an absolute change for the future, one must infiltrate the ideas of pre-service teachers. If teaching methods are going to change in the future then pre-service teachers of today must be taught using different methods so that they will be able to bring about a change in the lives of their future students. The curriculum is the battle ground for social change.

Cultural Workers

Pre-service teachers are in the process of becoming cultural workers. It is my contention that a cultural worker is defined as one that does not trample on others ways of existing in the world. This means, as Henry Giroux (1992) has been claiming for years, "teachers need to understand more critically what they know and how they come to know in a way that enables them to venture into communities of difference so that they can reconceptualize the role of the school as both a human service center and a neighborhood resource" (p. 67). A cultural worker will also embrace others differences armed with the

knowledge that when we accept others for whom they are rather than what we want them to be, we all benefit. Edmundson (2004) espouses, “[i]t is a good thing to know and respect difference, if it is worthy of respect, and to understand other cultures in their own terms. Such knowledge may impede cruelty and exploitation...” (p.126). It is my hope that pre-service teachers involved in service learning activities will eventually realize that our cultural differences make us stronger not less than the mainstream. This is especially when we (educators) work together for the good of all. McLaren (1991) maintains, “[a]s cultural workers we need to struggle toward detotalization and deterritorialization of global...patriarchy” (p.7). He further asserts, “[w]e need to restructure colonized reality by taking the risk of bringing such reality into our classrooms so that it can be interrogated and transformed into new paradigms...” (p.7). Therefore, pre-service teachers cultivated as cultural workers would be open to accepting, acknowledging, empowering, and validating students from diverse backgrounds when they enter their classrooms.

Connections: Curriculum Studies and Service Learning

This section of the review of literature is important because there is a gap in dissertation research concerning the integration of service learning into the curriculum. I theorize that the conversation that surrounds service learning is reminiscent of the research centered on the reconceptualization of the field of curriculum. During the reconceptualization, the field of curriculum went through a change. There was a move from the Tyler paradigm of curriculum development to Pinar’s understanding curriculum. This shift of understanding spawned many questions: What counts as educational research? What is education? What other ways can be used to examine and understand

curriculum? In addition, the reconceptualization has helped many understand that education does not only take place in the confines of the four walls of a classroom. Many scholars are contributing to this area: Greg Dimitriadis, John Weaver, Gloria Ladson Billings, Sandra Murray Nettles, Ming Fang He, and Mary Doll. William Reynolds (2003), one of the contributing founders of the field of curriculum studies, assigns the label of new generation scholars to those that dare to highlight new connections. He writes, “[t]hese new generation scholars weave across and through disciplines ...” (p. 96). Education takes place in every aspect of life and the multiple ways of understanding must be respected, cultivated, and recognized. Service learning is also a part of education that assists with the cultivation of understanding and appreciating diversity.

Service learning is expanding ideas surrounding experiential learning and opening doors for alternative teaching techniques, just as the reconceptualization has opened doors for different ways of understanding curriculum. This is evidenced by the way that education is viewed both inside and outside of school. For example, Toni Morrison acknowledged that there are two types of education going on in society, the one in the school and the one that is not (Taylor-Guthrie, 1994). More attention must be paid to the world outside of school because it has considerably more influence on students than ever before. In *Understanding Curriculum*, Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (2002) addressed the phenomenon of the “out-of-school” experience. They stated “...scholars argue that various institutions, ranging from the church and temple to media and business, from day-care centers to the family itself, have curricula and the school curriculum often challenges these other curricula” (p.27).

Freire (1998) asserted that “listening to all that come to us, regardless of their intellectual level, is a human duty and reveals identification with democracy ...” (p.20). Dimitriadis (2001) espoused that relevant education, education about survival itself, takes place in churches, on street corners, and in other locally validating settings. He observed students in community settings and reached the conclusion that they were already successful in their own communities. As a result, he realized that respect for students’ street savvy or alternative intelligence must be cultivated in an attempt to reach them in the classroom. Pre-service teachers will benefit greatly from the examples that Dimitriadis shares, but they need their own experiences. They must also be afforded an opportunity to understand that they may not have all of the answers, but at least they will know the problems.

Dewey (1938) stated in *Democracy and Education*, “[e]very adult has acquired, in the course of his prior experience and education, certain measures of the worth of various sorts of experience” (p.234). I contend that education is everything that shapes the intellect and behavior of students. It is the formal education learned in the schools, the informal education learned in the community, and everything in every facet of life that has the potential for curriculum use. This form of education can be used to raise the level of consciousness in pre-service teacher education students.

I believe in the use of service learning to raise the consciousness level of students and pre-service teachers specifically. This experimental method of teaching gives students an opportunity to view the world from a position different from their own. Madeline Grumet (1988) encourages others to study experiential ways of understanding. She states that we must work to remember, imagine, and realize ways of knowing and

being that can span the chasm of presently separating our public and private worlds (Grumet, 1988).

Literacy is the foundation of all learning. The reconceptualization has opened the door to understanding curriculum and made allowances for the inclusion of multiple ways of existing, viewing the world, and teaching students. Service learning is included in this arena of understanding. This is significant because the participants in this study live an academic existence that is different from traditional freshmen. They are underprepared. They are entering college through developmental education, an area of access for those that have been left out or left behind. This access to education has a price. State mandated post-secondary high stakes testing of the American College Test (ACT) called COMPASS is being used as an assessment measure to set them apart from other college freshmen. They live and labor with the knowledge that if they are not successful within three semesters, they could be dismissed from all colleges and universities in the University System of Georgia. Students are given an opportunity to appeal for one additional attempt, and on a number of system campuses, they may appeal for two additional attempts. It is imperative that something of added value be placed in these courses. I believe that integrating service learning to raise consciousness is the added value that is needed.

Connections: Service Learning and Developmental Education

What is developmental education? Basic studies, developmental studies, learning support, remedial studies, transitional studies, these are just a few of the names that have been assigned to developmental education departments over the years. The constant name changes lend an air of uncertainty to this area of education not only for faculty but also

students. The National Association of Developmental Educators (NADE) defines it as being “a field of practice and research with a theoretical foundation in developmental psychology and learning theory” (NADE, 2005, p.1). I believe that developmental education is a place of curriculum understanding. Hence, it is filled with the fruition of the reconceptualization of curriculum because the overall mission is to “understand.” The secondary mission of developmental education is to create an environment of success for students. When students in developmental education succeed, it is because developmental educators understand why students have math anxiety, why illiteracy exists, why students are turned off by learning, and why the issue of self esteem has a major role in learning. Understanding is the key to helping student cross this proverbial “bridge over troubled water” (Simon, 1969).

No matter what the department is called, its job is to wash students in the wisdom of basic education: reading, writing, and mathematics. Fluff them up with confidence in their newly acquired or re-energized skills and place them neatly folded on the table of college level departments. Is there a place for developmental education? Yes, as long as education in the United States of America seeks to provide access for all learners there will always be a place for developmental education. In a report on strengthening K-16 transition policies, Bueschel (2003) stated,

All community colleges offer remedial education courses. This function has been part of the mission [of community colleges] from their inception.

In the past, the assumption was that returning students who were rusty in their skills would need opportunities for review of basic concepts. However, it became clear that in lots of cases, both for returning students and recent high

school graduates, many students never learned the basic skills in the first place.
(p.14)

The findings from a national survey conducted by the Education Commission of the States (ECS) on community college remedial education found that “ the number of United States community college students that need remediation is high” (2002, p 23). The commission further espoused, that the “potential increase is attributed to 4-year institutions begin discouraged from providing remedial education” (ECS, 2002, p.15). It is a place of democracy in the educational system; all are welcome.

Developmental Reading in Georgia

According to the University System of Georgia, the formalization of developmental education in Georgia began in 1974 (USG, 2006). Since that time, the system wide program has evolved and changed to meet students growing need for developmental education needs. Today, many lenses are used to aid both student and teachers in their understanding of different ways to learn. It is my belief that pre-service teachers enrolled in this course will receive a residual benefit from the experience of being marginalized. They will understand their future students’ frustration with standardized testing and the unbending force of educational policies.

Reconceptualized ways of understanding are being generated and proposed by new theorists in the area of reading. Many of their theories have given us new ways of understanding and solving reading problems. Colin Lankshear (2005) theorizes that it is never simply a case of being literate in and of itself but of being literate with regard to something, some aspect of knowledge, or experience. This theory creates an atmosphere that is culturally inviting in the classroom because this means that everyone is literate in

some area of knowledge or experience. It is directly linked with Terry Atkinson's (2000) theory that validates intuition as a cognitive style. Atkinson (2000) believes, as I do, that learning to trust one's own judgment is an outcome of risk-taking, flexibility, problem-solving, and testing judgments through action. Trusting one's own judgement is a major hurdle in teaching pre-service teachers enrolled in remedial reading. The barrier of self-mistrust must be broken in order for students to learn to read critically and ultimately succeed.

The reconceptualization has been a catalyst for change in the area of reading. Today we are able to examine reading through many critical lenses. Understanding the multiple ways that students acquire reading skills is the first step to solving the problem of illiteracy. Students receive literacy instruction in many places outside of the classroom; therefore, a new level of understanding is needed to teach them successfully. Whether it is through video games, television, the basketball court, or an after school program, we must exhaust all measures to help them. Pre-service teachers engaged in service learning have a unique opportunity to experience one of the many by products of the reconceptualization: experiential approaches to explore different ways of understanding. Working in places different from the classroom will give them an added connection with their future students.

Pre-Service Teachers in Developmental Reading

There is a great need for experiential methods of teaching to help pre-service teachers of all backgrounds understand and appreciate the life experiences that their diverse students and colleagues bring to the school and classroom environment. Ayers (2004) stated, "[a]ll students, from preschool through adult education, bring two

powerful, propulsive, and expansive questions with them each day into every classroom. ...Who am I or who am I in the world? What in the world are my choices or my chances” (p. 32)? This is not possible if students do not understand ways of communicating other than their own. In *Experience and Nature*, Dewey (1925) espoused that “language was a mode of interaction between at least two beings, a speaker and a hearer” (p.36). Each group had acquired their habits of speech from the specific group to which they belonged. Service learning experiences will give students an opportunity to learn new ways of communicating for themselves and their future students.

Pre-service teachers of all cultures should seek to become cultural allies. Their alliance with others will provide them with human sources who will openly share cultural knowledge and personal experiences that will help students succeed. Students need more than textbook information to help them understand and appreciate people of other cultures.

In the book, *The Dreamkeepers*, Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994) asks the question, “Is culture relevant?” (p., 28) The history of the South answers affirmatively, “yes.” Ladson-Billings’ (1994) inquiry further espouses “that many teachers of African American students receive—from their teacher preparation programs, from administrators, and from ‘conventional wisdom’—leads to an intellectual death” (p.15). I contend that if service learning is used in the early stages of a pre-service teacher’s academic career this could spawn an understanding of culture prior to field experiences. Ladson-Billings (1994) goes on to suggest that “successful teachers...travel a different route to ensure the growth and development of their students” (p. 15). The route taken by the students in this study is quite different.

There are very few studies on service learning and pre-service teachers, but none of the studies address the issue of being a pre-service teacher beginning their academic careers enrolled in developmental education courses. It is worth noting that I only found one study conducted primarily concerned with the use of service learning in developmental education. In my study, a new route must be tried and teacher education majors starting out in developmental education is a road that has not been traveled. I believe that it is an avenue that must be explored.

In an exploration of education, one must begin by looking at the foundation of those who want to teach in the classroom. The dynamics of the classroom including the influences of racial differences are key to understanding how students that have been consigned to developmental education through the use of post-secondary high stakes testing manage to hold on to their dreams of becoming teachers. “As it is true of every other aspect of United States society, education in this country has been profoundly shaped by conceptions of race” (Weiler, 2002, p.11). Hence, racial dynamics are at the very core of the classroom. They greet us every morning as we step across the threshold whether we walk in as the instructor or the student.

Classroom Dynamics: Brief Exploration of White Privilege

What is white privilege? How does it work? How can it be identified in the classroom? Is it something that is discovered or learned? These are just some of the varied questions that entered my mind when I began to revisit the issue of white privilege. Being a teacher of reading and vocabulary, I often dissect words according to their Greek and Latin roots. Hence, I examined the word privilege, and I began to dissect it. The etymology of privilege is Latin: *privus* meaning one’s own and *lex* meaning law.

Therefore, upon initial examination of the word, one would think that white privilege loosely defined means “one’s own white law.” Could this be true? I continued to search for deeper meaning.

Another question arose in my thoughts. What does white privilege have to do with my classroom or service learning for that matter? According to the United States Department of Education (2005), the majority of pre-service teachers in this country are middle class, European American, and English speaking women. According to Giroux (2000),

“[w]hite middle class children often are protected by the myth of innocence and are considered incapable of exhibiting at risk behavior. And if they do exhibit deviant behavior, it is often blamed on the alien influence of popular culture ...or other outside forces well removed from the spaces of whiteness and affluence” (p.8).

I theorized from this statement that white privilege must be addressed in this study due to the fact that a number of the teacher education majors enrolled in the developmental reading course are Caucasian. In addition, the racial dynamics of the South and its long history of unrest dictate that this problem be addressed. For many of these students, being enrolled in a remedial education course is their first experience of being marginalized as “at risk.” For others, it is just the status quo. I believe that this fact has an impact on my dissertation research.

Upon further investigation, I discovered that nationally the majority of developmental education students are White (Boylan, 1999). White privilege cannot be ignored in service learning projects. According to Nieto (2000), “service learning without

a focused attention to the complexity of racial and cultural difference can reinforce dominant hegemonic cultural ideology” (p.ix).

In their research on service learning, Marilynne Boyle-Baise and Christine Sleeter (1998) found that service learning can support multicultural teacher education by providing pre-service teachers with experiences with cultural diversity and poverty. Their findings also indicate that a by product of the experience is an opportunity for mainstream students to gain respect for diverse people. My internal analysis has forced me to admit that the oppression of White privilege has a daily effect on my life and the lives of my students both inside and outside of the classroom.

There is an overwhelming historically dichotomous relationship between Blacks and Whites in America; therefore, privilege cannot be discussed without mentioning the other. I began to think about what effects Whiteness has had on the minority students enrolled in the course. I wondered how many African American students are in developmental reading as a consequence of unconsciously not yielding to a misguided perception of Whiteness. Author, bell hooks (2003) noted: “Black students who mock their studious black peers have themselves been socialized via schools and mass media to believe that education has no positive meaning in their live and too much education will lead the away from blackness”(p.70). For example, when I taught elementary school, on more than on occasion, I encountered brilliant students of color that did not want their peers to know that they were capable of making good grades. The overwhelming reason that they gave me was always that they did not want their friends to think that they were acting “White.” This is not a new phenomenon; students have always influenced each other. Dubois (1920) espoused: “Harvard was the goal of my dreams, but my white

friends hesitated and my colored friends were silent.” Reflecting on these sentiments led me to further reflect on my teaching experiences during my elementary school teaching days. I vividly recall that this type of thinking was prevalent in students in my elementary school during the mid 90s. Therefore, I theorize, that due to the students that I taught in elementary school arriving on my college campus, this type of thinking must be among college students today. In *Teaching Community*, bell hooks (2003) espoused, “such thinking is not simply rampant in public school, but it abounds in colleges and universities” (p.70). This may be a contributing factor in the number of traditional freshmen enrolled in developmental education courses.

W. E.B. DuBois (1920), primarily known as the author of, *The Souls of Black Folk*, also wrote a lesser known book entitled, *Darkwater*, in which he wrote a chapter entitled the *Souls of White Folk*. In 1920, when the book was originally published, DuBois was conducting a discussion on the effects of Whiteness. DuBois (1920) attacked Whiteness not just for the sake of African Americans or pointing a finger. He attacked Whiteness for sake of the enlightenment of future generations of humanity. DuBois (1920) stated:

The discovery of personal whiteness among the world’s peoples is a very modern thing a nineteenth and twentieth century matter, indeed. The ancient world would have laughed at such a distinction. The Middle Age regarded skin color with mild curiosity; and even up into the eighteenth century we were hammering our national manikins into one, even more than birth. Today we have changed all that, and the world in a sudden, emotional conversation has discovered that it is white and by that token, wonderful! (p.41)

The attack reflects the lineage of Whiteness and its perception. I believe that DuBois was perplexed concerning the metamorphosis of the idea of Whiteness just as many are today. This revelation is evident in the aforementioned quote.

Where's the Learning in Service Learning? chronicles a service learning study conducted by Eyler and Giles (1999). In the study, a white student discussed becoming aware of her privilege. She stated:

This is something that really shocked me—how much I felt like people treated me preferentially because I was white...Other folks who were Latino told me that would happen: 'Yeah, they will treat you that way.' I was just surprised at how much that sort of racism is ingrained in things that I totally take for granted a lot. (Eyler& Giles, 1999, p. 144)

In the statement above, the student espouses the sentiment of waking from a dream state. She was not conscious of the perception of her place in the world. Students need a wake up call.

“Despite the continued prevalence of racism of white supremacist thought and action, academic settings are one of the few locations in our nation where individuals cross the boundaries of race to learn from one another and join in fellowship together” (hooks, 2003 p. 71). The acknowledgement of Whiteness and White privilege is not a new phenomenon in the world, but the open discussion of the topic is new. It impacts every facet of our lives, including the classroom. It is my hope that my students will become conscious of the way that they are perceived in the world, much like the student in this study.

Research on the Education of African Americans in the South

It is my belief that education is the nine letter key to unlock the door of democracy and intellectual freedom. Researching this area of educational history solidifies this thought. The inclusion of this body of research is pertinent to this study because it takes place in Georgia and by products of the past sin of the south, i.e. slavery, are ever present. McFeely (1994) describes it in this manner, “it slumbers silently...all over the South” (p.44). Specifically, W.E.B. DuBois (1969) visited the site of this study, Albany, during his research travels for the book, *The Souls of Black Folk*. In the book, he vividly describes the difference in the Southwestern portion of the city versus the Northwestern portion of the city. He wrote, “Quite a contrast to the southwestern part of Dougherty County is the northwest. Soberly timbered in oak and pine, it has none of that half-tropical luxuriance of the southwest” (DuBois, 1969, p.97). In spite of Dubois’s commentary, today, the land in the Southwestern portion of the county is undervalued in contrast to the overvaluation of the land in the Northwestern portion of the county. This is pertinent because today the difference in way that the two areas are developed both residentially and commercially is a constant source of conflict and underlying racial unrest. DuBois (1969) explained that this area of the state was once called the “Egypt of the Confederacy,” and he proclaimed it the “Black Belt.” By virtue of these two proclamations, this area must be explored to update the record. For example, he describes, in great detail, the scenery on Gillonsville Road. DuBois (1969) writes, “[i]t is a silent cluster of farm-houses standing on the cross-roads, with one of its stores closed and the other kept by [an African American] preacher”(p.99). Today, the name of the

road is spelled Gillionville. The official address of Darton College is 2600 Gillionville Road.

The review of literature in this area of history shows that prior to 1926, people of African descent were visibly absent from any scholarly or intellectual discourse that had to do with civilization (Boateng, 1995). The beginning of educating African Americans in the South began formally after the Civil War. The Freedman's Bureau was charged with setting up education for former slaves (Jackson, 1996). Jackson also noted that the first Black colleges were started by church mission donations and money from the Freedman's Bureau. After slavery, there must have been an overwhelming sense of urgency by some to enlighten those previously denied access to literacy and knowledge. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (1986) addresses the feelings of the newly freed towards acquiring the accoutrements of power. He states: "Learning to read, the slave narratives repeat again and again, was a decisive political act; learning to write, as measured, by 18th century scale of culture and society, was an irreversible step away from the cotton field toward a freedom larger even than physical manumission" (Gates, 1986, p.28).

Further research shows that the major argument that ensued surrounding African Americans in higher education was related to the type of education that was necessary for the "citizens," vocational or liberal arts. This was the premise of the debate between W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington that was filled with controversy. DuBois (1903) believed that everyone needed to be educated, but there was a "talented tenth" that would be educated to become doctors, lawyers, and other professionals. These students would lead and guide the race out of a lifetime of poverty and illiteracy.

Booker T. Washington, [founder of Tuskegee Institute], held that each student should be trained in a vocation and do it to the best of ones ability (DuBois, 1903). Liberal Arts education was not advocated by Washington because he thought that, in time, the mainstream would accept African Americans. In Washington's eyes, upon acceptance, would be the time to pursue loftier goals of higher education in professional areas. In my estimation, W.E.B. DuBois has a point. I can see the merit in his argument with the college students of today. Many of the students that we serve will become a part of the "talented tenth." It does not matter that they are beginning their academic careers in developmental education. What matters is that they complete their education. They will be teachers, professors, curriculum specialist, etc. Why not use this time to help them understand how to help others? In the words of Anna Julia Cooper (1892), they must understand that we have a duty to "lift as we climb" (*Women*, 2006). At the time of the debate between, John Dewey spoke in opposition to vocational education. In *Democracy in Education*, Dewey (1916) stated:

...at the present juncture, there is a movement in behalf of something called vocational training, which, if carried on would...adapt to the existing industrial regime. This movement would continue traditional liberal education or cultural education for the few economically able to enjoy it, and would give to the masses a narrow technical trade education for specialized callings, carried on under the control of others. (p. 319)

This time in history was filled with remarkable events. For example, in 1876, Meharry Medical College was founded through collaboration between the Freedman's

Aid Society and the Methodist Episcopal Church (Meharry, 2006). Meharry was the first Black medical school in the United States.

In 1914, the Journal of Negro History had its fledgling issue. Woodson recognized that Black accomplishments were ignored in standard history textbooks and sought to find a way to enlighten the masses about the achievements of the race. This had a profound effect on the education of Blacks in the South because this was the beginning of a discussion on racial pride. In 1915, Dr. Carter G. Woodson arrived in Washington, D.C. He and some of his colleagues from Chicago founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life. In 1926, Woodson started Negro History Week (Woodson, 2004). Woodson chose February because even though the 13th Amendment to the constitution was signed in January which abolished slavery, slaves did not start to hear of the news until February. He could have chosen June when slaves in the Mid Western states received the word of their freedom. It was his desire that it would come a time when this event would be unnecessary because all Americans would be willing to accept the wonderful contributions of people of African descent (Woodson, 1933). This is the same type of thinking that Booker T. Washington (Jackson, 1996) displayed. Both of them were optimistic that one day Blacks would truly be accepted and validated by American society.

In 1972, the celebration of Black Heritage was renamed Black History Week, and in 1976, 30 years after Dr. Woodson's death, the week was expanded to a month in conjunction with the celebration of the nation's bicentennial, this observance was expanded (Woodson, 2004). In summary, this review of pivotal events in the Southern

education of African Americans has strengthened my resolve to conduct my study using service learning.

Raising Consciousness in Service Learning in a Developmental Education Program

What is consciousness? Why is consciousness important? These questions drive my quest for utilizing service learning .Consciousness can be described as being aware of your own existence and what is around you (Klein & Klein, 1979). It is the power to absorb your environment with total enlightenment. For pre-service teacher education students, this power is a must. The power to make decisions that affect their lives as valuable human beings is not a privilege but a right. Beauchamp (2003) cites that through education, those in poverty can gain understanding concerning the source of their oppression. This will enable students to understand that they are not the cause but the victim of an exploitative system. W.E.B. DuBois (1969) described consciousness in this manner:

The [African American]is ...born with a veil, and gifted with a second sight in this American world-a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a particular sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, or measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness- an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts...two warring ideals in one dark body. (p.3)

Pre-service teachers need to acquire knowledge concerning oppressive situations that would relate to their future students. Dewey (1916) stated, "Consciousness is nothing

which we have which gazes idly on the scene around one or which has impressions made upon it by physical things; it is a name for the purposeful quality of an activity, for the fact that it is directed by an aim” (p. 104). Therefore, consciousness raising for consciousness sake is not enough. I contend that service learning’s potential consciousness raising value is enhanced when used with pre-service teachers because as Dewey (1916) advocated, it will have an aim: cultivating cultural workers for the future.

An example of consciousness raising in action is the Highlander Folk School. In 1932, educator Myles Horton founded the Highlander Folk School. The school was modeled after Danish folk schools, which provided adult education, with specific emphasis on history and government to raise the consciousness of students. The school was located in Mouteagle, Tennessee. Today it is located in New Market, Tennessee. During the time of the segregated South, this school of adult education educated students of all races together. This was virtually unheard of in this region of the country during this time.

Freire (1994) stated that there is no change without dreams, as there is no dream without hope. Using lived experiences involves what Paulo Freire called the “formation of critical consciousness” (p. 32). This is a different process than raising one’s conscious awareness; this process helps oppressed people break through myths that have been perpetuated by the dominate culture (Freire, 1973).

In *Education for Critical Conscientiousness*, Freire (1973) implied that there are three stages of progression which helps critical consciousness become a reality. Stage one is semi-intransitive consciousness. This is the type of consciousness that is not critical.

This is the consciousness of action which in reality are two constituents of a critical relationship with the world. In this stage, a person's total being is concerned with surviving and living day-to-day. There is no time for them to stop, think, and reflect on the world around them. Stage two, naïve transitivity, is characterized by a nostalgic longing for the past, a gregarious over simplification of problems, and a lack of interest in investigation. In the final stage, critical transitivity, total reality sets in. The student no longer relies on preconceived notions or distortions. During this stage open self analysis begins.

Freire (1970) coined the term “conscientization” (p.71) in reference to students that are moving through these stages. It takes a culturally collective effort to move through this process. Hence, this is the heart of Liberatory Education new term; connect to Freire because the concepts should liberate a people, not just individuals within the culture.

In an interview with Gary Olsen in 1992, Freire, stated, “[i]t is not difficult to understand, for example that becoming critical in the process of reading reality does not come about through a mere intellectual exercise”(p.12). Practice or praxis is always stressed in reference to critical consciousness. Freire's (1973) praxis involves a cycle of action, reflection, and action. Critical consciousness takes a lifetime commitment because reflection is ongoing. This is what is needed to affect a change.

Criticisms of Raising Consciousness

Searching for criticism for consciousness raising was an arduous task. The literature search revealed that there are little or no arguments against raising consciousness. For many, service learning is seen as a tool of ideological indoctrination.

Huckin (1997) stated , “It is important to let students choose that kind of agency they want to work within and to do so with full awareness of the kind of work the agency does and its governing philosophy of ideology. Many nonprofit agencies have strong political stances, and it might not be a good idea to have a right-to-life activist, for example, doing a project for Planned Parenthood” (p. 49).

Benefits of Raising Consciousness

When consciousness is raised, a greater appreciation of others prevails. This is the way of teaching tolerance through experience. In essence, students are freer in their mission to educate because of the first hand knowledge they acquire. “Education as the practice of freedom affirms healthy self-esteem as it promotes their capacity to be aware and live consciously (hooks, 2003, p. 73).” The experience of volunteering will also help students connect with their community through networking.

Empowerment

Service Learning will provide a method for pre-service teachers to obtain invaluable experience working with others from diverse circumstances in life. It is great for students to study other cultures, but often times it is only text based studying, merely observing through the author’s words. This type of cultural studying is flawed because cultural information written about the “other” by a member of the majority is often disseminated in a skewed manner. The power of the dissemination of information is an awesome responsibility and when facts are omitted, overlooked, or negated from texts; it marginalizes the group of people that are involved. According to Delpit (1995), “[p]eople are the only authentic chroniclers of their own experience” (Delpit, 1995, p. 47). It is imperative that pre-service teachers are exposed to the classroom early in their academic

career but this is not enough. We must realize that each cultural community has its own literate traditions. “[Students] must be encouraged to understand the value of the code [that students] already possess as well as to understand the power realities in this country (Delpit, 1995, p. 40).”

The experience that they will gain through service learning will help them realize their destiny and fulfill their responsibilities to themselves and others. Rosenberg (2000) concluded that students were not being empowered in the traditional classroom, but rather, they were being separated from the source of empowerment, the real world. Pre-service teachers will never be able to be spectators on the sideline of life when it comes to power, culture, and difference. They must be given every opportunity to experience and understand the social context that their future students live on a daily basis. Peter McLaren (1989) would call this empowerment. McLaren (1989) defines empowerment as, “...not only helping student to understand and engage with the world around them, but also enabling them to exercise the kind of courage needed to change the social order where necessary” (p.39). It is my sincere hope that if pre-service teachers are armed with the knowledge that one person can make a difference, they will decide to pick up the symbolic baton that has been laid at their feet.

Outstanding teachers are those that explore every alternative method to assist students in acquiring knowledge. Pre-service teachers that participate in service learning will have a firsthand opportunity to see experiential learning methods in action. This will potentially empower them the courage to implement innovative methods of knowledge acquisition with their future students. Perhaps the experience will help them continue to run the race in the tradition of those that have gone before them. It is my hope that they

continue the fight to add to the discourse of our human existence and a multicultural appreciation of all people through service to the global community.

Building Community

What is community? Before one can build a community, one must define the meaning of community. Some define community in terms of the location of a neighborhood. John Dewey (1916) defined community as a “group of people that have a common understanding or like-mindedness: aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge” (p.4). I see community as a place that must be explored. Hepburn (1997) characterized service learning as a societal response to the later day isolation that people impose upon themselves.

The free time that people have is often spent with things rather than neighbors or people with similar interests in our community. The TV, VCR, radio, computer, exercise machine, and electronic toys engage people at home, often leaving them socially isolated from most of the local community. (p.141)

The location of the service learning site has a definite effect on students’ perceptions of community.

James Carignan (1998) contends that “learning is rooted in place,” (p. 77) and he extends this thought by espousing that service learning “connects teachers and students to place and contributes mightily to positive community relations essential to this dimension of learning” (p.12). Service learning seeks to meet a real need in the community. There is a great need for an exposition of the love of reading in the Albany, Georgia. The 32.1% illiteracy rate is alarming. Service learning projects that display the joy of reading to

children will plant the seeds of literacy. This is a service to the community that will have a ripple effect that will touch not only the children but their families.

Teaching for Social Justice

What is social justice and how does it relate to service learning? According to Maxine Greene (1998), social justice “means teaching to the end of arousing a consciousness of membership, active and participant membership in a society of unfilled promises....” I contend that to achieve social justice, change is necessary. Modifications to societal problems do not work. They are only temporary fixes that will erupt into a greater mass of problems as time passes. Lempert (1995) noted that for many, social [justice] change is the ultimate goal of service learning. The combination of serving ones fellow man while learning lends this area an air of cultivating social agents of change. Dewey (1916) noted that societal change needs a specific type of education. Dewey (1916) emphasizes

... that a society which not only changes but which has the ideal of such change as will improve it, will have different standards and methods of education from one which aims simply at the perpetuation of its own customs. To make the general ideas set forth applicable to our won educational practice, it is therefore necessary to come to closer quarters with the nature of present social life.

(Dewey, 1916, p. 81)

Social justice and service learning are natural companions because both serve to raise consciousness through action. Working students engaged in service learning will be able to create a place of democracy for themselves through the discussion of ideas. In *Promises to Keep*, Dimitriadis and Carlson (2003) assert: “Individuals do not make

history as mere individuals but as participants in a collective ‘becoming,’ as part of social movements engage in social justice.” Collective groups empower people to share ideas and think critically about what needs to be done.

Teaching for Transformation

Education is spiritual. It is the freedom of knowing. Transformation is the metamorphosis of the conscious. Service learning is a marriage between education and transformation. It is a deep commitment to serve. Therefore, service learning is a form of spirituality.

Spirituality is different from religion. Spirituality is universal. Being from the Deep South, the Bible Belt, I have first hand experience with the difference between religion and spirituality. In the South, your religious affiliation has the power to unite or segregate. The end of the spectrum on which you land is dictated by the religious hierarchy in the minds of the people with whom you are involved at any given time. Often times, your religious affiliation dictates the amount of communication you will have with various individuals. It is the second question that people ask. This question is preceded by asking for your name and followed by asking about your relatives.

In contrast, spirituality is concerned with the qualities of the human spirit: love, compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, contentment, a sense of responsibility, and a sense of harmony (Lama, 1999). I examined the attributes of spirituality in relation to service learning, and they are all a part of service to others. “When people recognize their own spiritual nature, they are freed from the oppression of having to identify primarily with transient and questionable social configurations and to struggle to build a sense of identity in fear, anxiety and social competition” (Mustakova-Possardt, 2004, p.3). Service

learning is truly a form of spirituality that allows classroom learning to transcend four walls and enable students to find their true nature.

The setting of the classroom does not give students the knowledge of where their students live or how they have to cope with living from day-to-day. Students need to be exposed to people from all socio-economic levels of different races in order for them to shake off the shackles of stereotypical thinking. It is important for students to recognize that there are forms of knowledge that they have not recognized. Placing students in sites that are different from their lived experience will awaken their consciousness and create empathy, not sympathy, for others. Freire (1970) espoused that it was not possible for one to be democratic without experiencing tolerance, coexistence with the different, as a fundamental principle. Students that have a lived experience similar to those of their future students will also benefit from service in a site different from their own. Dewey (1916) stated the following: “It is not a mere change in the concept of culture –or a liberal mind –and social service which requires an educational re-organization, but the educational transformation is needed to give full and explicit effect to the changes implied in social life” (p. 257). If pre-service teachers are to avoid negatively stereotyping the language patterns of their students, it is important that they be encouraged to interact with, and willingly learn from, knowledgeable members of their students’ cultural group (Depot, 1995, p. 56). The author, bell hooks (1994), stated in an interview with Gary Olsen, “[t]his type of interchange of ideas is known as situational pedagogy.” She also espoused that “[i]t is essential in a multicultural classroom that situational pedagogy be used to bridge understanding” (Olsen, 1994, p. 2). It has been my experience that this type of human interaction causes a change in students’ reality. I theorize that service learning can

be conceptualized to allow educators to use place as a curriculum site for diversity appreciation. With careful planning, students can be placed in a site that provides opportunities for them to interact and work with children of diverse backgrounds and social experiences. The first hand observance of interaction between cultural groups, coupled with studying group dynamics in theory, is a powerful way to teach the principles of multiculturalism. According to Childress (2000), human behavior and artifacts are articulated in ways that language is not. When they are read together, they become a cultural story, a landscape of collective dreams. It is my belief that this method will do more to humanize the “other” than anything that is printed in a textbook. Author, Kent Koth (2003) stated, “[i]f we are serious about using service learning as a means to transform society, we must intentionally connect service learning and spirituality to make these long term commitments a greater possibility” (p.3). I realize that transformation in the area of teacher education is not an easy task, but the method of service learning is one that can be used in any level of education or subject area to establish a common connection between all people.

Summary

In conclusion, a study of relevant literature shows that the using service learning encourages literacy education and empowers students. I believe that using service learning with pre-service teachers is a step toward alleviating many of the problems that exist cross culturally. Incorporating service learning into the developmental education curriculum is the first step in making a difference in understanding cultural differences. Pre-service students have a destiny to fulfill and a responsibility to themselves and others. I realize that I must pick up the symbolic baton that has been laid at my feet. I must

continue to run the race in the tradition of those who have gone before me. Now I am armed with the knowledge that one person can make a difference because enlightenment drives social change. Throughout the literature, the teachings of the Highlander School have been a vehicle for transformation and consciousness raising. I realize that I must continue the fight to add to the discourse of our human existence, service learning, and a multicultural appreciation of all people.

CHAPTER 3

COLLECTING STORIES

The following is a brief overview of the theoretical framework and the method of inquiry of the study. For a more detailed explanation of service learning and raising critical consciousness, please refer to Chapter 2, Literature Review. For an expanded view of my theoretical framework, please refer to Chapter 1. The purpose of this study is to examine the use of service learning as a teaching tool and to investigate the possible residual effects on pre-service teachers. The pre-service teachers in question all began their academic career enrolled in a developmental reading course that I taught during fall 2004. This research could also open possibilities for change in the curriculum for developmental education.

Theoretical Framework

The works of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Anna Julia Cooper, and W.E.B. DuBois inform the framework of the study. These theorists are interconnected by a belief in personal experience and raising cultural consciousness. Using narrative inquiry for this study allowed me to tell the story of Kathy, Denise, Alberto, McKenzie, and Zena. According to Casey (1996), "Whether implicit or elaborated, every study of narrative is based on a particular understanding of the speaker's self" (p. 213). Nettles (2001) described her experience with narrative that led to a new narrative with the theme of empowerment.

As a black woman, I was all too familiar with the survival narrative...I went beyond loss and survival to a new narrative. It is built on the two fundamental human tendencies that psychologists and others have identified. One is

agency; expressed in strivings for power and independence....The other motivational theme is connection, the strivings for love and intimacy.

(p. 148-149).

Just as Nettles (2001) experience led her to a new narrative, I have been led to a new narrative. Community based narrative inquiry is the method used to guide the story collections and analysis of stories acquired from participants. This inquiry method was chosen because it allows me to use students' past experiences to create connections to their future profession. In addition, community based narrative will empower students through telling their stories.

Community Based Narrative Inquiry

The inquiry for this study is community based narrative inquiry. Thinking and researching for my study inquiry brought me to what Ayers (1995), describes as the, "point of transformation." As I searched for the appropriate inquiry, I saw myself as one that must inquire directly with the subject of my study in order to understand and find meaning. I reasoned that the participants and I live in the same community and have similar concerns. Although this is only the beginning of my study, I realized that the subject must collaborate with me, the researcher, in order to development true meaning. Hence, my background is important to this research. For this study I merged community based research and narrative inquiry. Community based narrative inquiry was used to examine the experience of the pre-service teachers in this study.

According to Hills and Mullet (2000), community based research is a collaboration between community groups and researcher for the purpose of creating new knowledge or understanding about a ...community issue in order to bring about change .

Community based research is collaborative, participatory, empowering ...and transformative” (p.2). This research method had philosophical roots in Freire’s concept of praxis and his participatory paradigm. Freire (1970) stated, “the act of knowing involves a dialectical movement which goes from action to reflection and from reflection to new action” (p. 31). Consequently the key relationship in community based research is theory to practice. Community based narrative inquiry facilitates the integration between the lived experience of students and their academic background and training. According to Dewey (1997) education without a philosophy of experience is inadequate. Community based narrative inquiry provides an exploration of service learning equipped with the resources (empowerment, social justice) for dismantling cultural barriers. Clandinin and Connell (2000) posit that the key to education is examining experience. Furthermore, this inquiry allows the voices of the students to be heard while embracing the needs of the community.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000), define narrative inquiry as an inquiry which emphasizes the dialogical nature of narrative research. The theoretical roots for the work of Clandinin and Connelly span various disciplines. These include the fields of psychology, anthropology, organizational research, and psychiatry to name a few. Multiples fields of study have been incorporated to look at narrative as a whole. They write “it has been instructive for us to read in other social sciences and in the humanities for insights into these changing inquiries and changing phenomena which resonate with a inform our own narrative inquires” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p.5). One of the major theorists that inform their work is John Dewey. They posit, “Dewey transforms a commonplace term, experience, in our educator’s language into an inquiry term, and

gives us a term that permits better understandings of educational life” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p.2).

Narrative research merges three processes; interviewing, listening, and interpretation into each other (Joelsson, Liebman, McAdams, 2003). In this study, it was imperative that the reason that students thoughts towards service learning and being enrolled in developmental education be ascertained. This conversation could only happen if they participated in the process of dialogue. Hence their interviews have played a pivotal role in the study.

Community based research promotes social learning processes that can expand the projected benefits from community organizations. Participants become aware of the injustices that others contend with on a daily basis. In the beginning of this awareness is derived from students volunteering to be a part of the study. The pre-service teachers in this study had an opportunity to reflect, express their views, and become the voice of experience for future students in developmental education that aspire to be teachers. In addition, they were able to reflect and synthesize about appropriate strategies that are needed to help others, both now and in the future.

Students arrive in teachers’ classrooms with their own set of values and ways of viewing the world. Interviewing students about their previous service learning placements will give them an unconscious opportunity to re-evaluate their preconceived ideas about others. I hope that readers of this study will be able to see the evidence of change in the interview transcripts. If pre-service teachers are placed in sites that are different from their background, they may be able to overcome some of their preconceived notions and develop high expectations for the minority children that they

will work with in the future. A by-product of this process is that students will learn to think and reflect critically.

I collaborated with students concerning their service learning placements. Participants specifically collaborated on the grade level and setting of the school in which they completed their service learning. This gave students an opportunity to explore future grade levels and disciplines that interested them.

Role of the Researcher

I was the chronicler of the process that students underwent throughout the project. This placed me in a new role as the researcher of the process. After approval was received from the Georgia Southern University Office of Institutional Research Bureau, I collected data, coded it, and analyzed it for future use. It is also important to note that I was the instructor of record for the developmental reading course that the participants were enrolled in during fall 2004. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), this is the practical side of narrative inquiry. The authors state:

Our own work, perhaps more prosaically “practically” than most is to rethink curriculum and teaching in terms of a narrative inquiry which draws on classroom observation and participant observation of the practical, along with the bringing forward of personal experience in the form of stories, interviews, rules, principles, images, and metaphors. (p. 245)

This study is my fledgling effort to transform the curriculum. During the process, I attempted to create an interview environment that provided a safe place for students to expound on their experiences during the story collecting phase of this study. Students had

a choice of being interviewed in my office, the electronic classroom, at home, or some other location of their choosing.

Research Process

Utilizing the theoretical framework of my study as a guide, various qualitative methods of collection were used. Data collection methods include student profiles, portraiture, student interviews, research journal, and college portraiture. This study recounted the experience of five of my former developmental reading students that are pre-service teachers. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study. The first step of story collection was to obtain consent for the dissertation study from the Georgia Southern Institutional Review Board. I submitted a proposal for approval to the board and after receiving approval by the board, I began to interview the participants.

Prior to beginning the collection process, I met with all of the participants individually to explain the study and interview methods. This informal meeting helped me to re-establish a connection with the participants. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) espoused that to achieve quality fieldwork is the goal of establishing relations, whether the research method is participant observations, interviewing, or searching documents (p. 74).

At that time, each participant received a copy of the informed consent form (see Appendix B). I informed participants that they could leave the study at any time and gave the participants the opportunity to decline their participation at this initial meeting. After obtaining signed permission forms from the participants, I formally began to set up an interview with each of the five participants.

The interviews were conducted between November 2006 and January 2007. The interviews lasted from thirty minutes to one hour in length. Each participant was

interviewed individually at different times to protect their identity from other participants. Critical questions were asked of each participant using the interview prompts (see Appendix A) approved by my advisor, Dr. He, and the Institutional Review Board. I also kept a researcher's journal during this process. Kvale (1996) suggests that there are several qualifications that a good interviewer must possess:

The interviewer should be knowledgeable about issues related to the study, structure the interview properly, be clear, gentle, open, and sensitive, steer the participant to the important information of the study, ask critical questions- not simply accepting all that the participant says at face value, remember what the participant said during the interview and have the participant elaborate, and provide interpretations of meaning during the interview. (p. 148)

Prior to the first interview, I practiced saying each question in front of a mirror. I wanted to make sure that I did not have to constantly look at the list of interview prompts. I used this technique so that I would not make my participants uncomfortable. Following each interview, I wrote up any observations about the interview and field notes. I also began to transcribe the interview immediately following each session. All information was marked with the pseudonym of the participants.

College Portraiture

The research for this study took place at a community college in Southwest Georgia. This is the site of the study because I am from Albany, Georgia and teach at Darton College. The enrollment at this college as of fall 2006 was approximately 4700 students.

Darton College is a community college that offers career degrees, two year transfer degrees, and one year certificate programs. Darton career program graduates enter the work force upon receiving their degrees while transfer program graduates continue their academic studies at four year colleges or universities. Over the past few years, the racial makeup of the campus has become increasingly more diverse. Today, the majority of the college is European American (54.7%) while the African American population runs a close second in number at 42%. Other ethnic groups that are represented on campus are as follows: Asian/Pacific Islander 1.2%, Hispanic 1%, Multiracial 1%, and Native American .2% (Darton, 2006). Over 50% of the students enrolled at Darton College are traditional student just out of high school. Non-traditional students, who have been out of high school five or more years, make up the remaining portion of Darton College's enrollment.

It was important to conduct this research due to the illiteracy rate of the community and the national, state, and local teacher shortage. The illiteracy rate in Albany, Georgia is 32.1% (H. Hollis, personal communication, May 18, 2006). As a part of the mission of the college, Darton seeks to serve the community in multiple areas of need.

Darton College is a community college institution in Southwest Georgia. Darton College offers 2-year transfer and career degrees and 1-year certificate programs. The institution was established in 1963 as Albany Junior College. The citizens of Albany and Dougherty County approved a bond referendum for \$1,600,000.00 for the funding of the original land and the first five buildings (Darton, 2005). The first classes were offered in 1966. The current name, Darton College, was approved by the Board of Regents in 1986.



Figure 3.1 Service Area for Darton College

Darton's service (figure 1) area is comprised of fourteen counties in the Southwest Georgia region of the state. The counties included in this region area are Dougherty, Baker, Calhoun, Lee, Mitchell, Terrell, Worth, Colquitt, Crisp, Early, Miller, Randolph, Sumter, and Turner. The college makes every effort to respond to the needs of the community of which it is a part. For example, when the nationwide problem nursing shortage became an issue in the region, Darton answered the call by creating satellite nursing programs in Thomasville, Cordele, and Donaldsonville, Georgia. Darton College has also answered the state's call by creating a new division of nursing on the campus of East Georgia College. In addition, when there was a shortage of science and math certified middle school teachers, Darton again heeded the community's call for help by offering assistance through additional courses.

Service is an integral part of the mission of the institution which states that Darton seeks to serve by: (a) responding to the local area needs with a commitment to excellence; (b) fostering and maintaining a teaching/learning environment that sustains instructional excellence for diversely prepared students; (c) providing high quality educational programs and services; and (d) supporting faculty development in order to encourage instructional excellence, scholarly advancement and creative activities (Darton, 2005). Service learning is another avenue that will enhance to the mission of the college as well as students' academic experience.

Participant Selection

I chose the participants based on three factors: their major, taking developmental reading, and their willingness to participate in the study. The fall 2004 service learning developmental reading course that included service learning had an enrollment of twenty two students. Only eight students out of twenty two met the requirements of the study. The researcher met individually with eight prospective participants. Each potential participant was given an explanatory letter of informed consent (See Appendix B) describing my study. No tangible incentive was offered for participation. Potential participants were given one week to decide whether they wanted to participate in the study. Two days prior to the deadline, I contacted each potential participant to remind them of the impending deadline. At the end of the deadline period, two students declined to participate without citing a reason. One student declined because he thought that he would be uncomfortable answering questions. As a result of these developments, I incorporated five of my former students into my study.

In order for students to participate in the study, they signed the consent form. The consent form gave me permission to make audio tapes of student interviews. The consent document also stated that withdrawal from the study would in no way affect the student and that they could drop out of the study at any time without being penalized. To ensure confidentiality of the participants' responses, each participant selected a pseudonym representative of their culture.

Teacher/Research Reflective Journal

I kept a reflective journal in which I recorded my observations concerning the research process and students' behaviors during interviews. Marshal and Rossman (1999) noted that self-reflection is a rich tool for overall analysis. My journal also includes my reflections about the participants' interviews. These reflections will aide others in viewing my world as the researcher of this inquiry. During the transcription phase of this study, I found that this journal helped me reflect and recall information about the participants and my thoughts.

Individual Interviews

Students were interviewed individually, concerning their service learning experience and beginning their academic career enrolled in developmental education. Students were also interviewed concerning their future classroom practice as a result of their service learning participation. All interviews were taped. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) suggest that tapes need to be used because they facilitate understanding. Students were asked questions concerning their service learning experience, what they received from the experience, and their thoughts concerning their perceived reality of the situation. Further,

each participant was asked to provide feedback concerning possible changes and recommendations for using service learning with other courses for future students.

Participant Profiles

The participant profiles for this chapter include the participant's age, race, and county of origin at the time of entrance to the college, teacher education major and standardized entrance scores (SAT/ACT). The participants in this study are pre-service teachers that were enrolled in my READ 0099 class during fall 2004. The profile also includes each student's information concerning their COMPASS placement scores. The COMPASS test is a standardized placement test developed for colleges and universities by the American College Testing Cooperation (ACT). Its objective use in Georgia is to ascertain, upon college entrance, whether a student is proficient in the areas of reading, English, and math.

Kathy is a twenty year old European American female from Baker County Georgia. She is an early childhood education major. Her SAT scores were 420, and math 450. Upon examination of her entering COMPASS test scores (78 English, reading 68) she was put into one remedial course. She was placed in reading 0099.

Denise is a twenty-one year old African American female from Cairo, Georgia. She is a middle grades education major. Her SAT scores were 310 verbal, and math 350. Upon examination of her entering COMPASS test scores (22 English, 32 reading, 18 math) she was put into three remedial courses. She was placed in math 0097 and reading 0099. She made the decision to take the remedial English course the next semester.

Alberto is a twenty year old Hispanic American male from Cairo, Georgia. He is a Spanish education major. Alberto was born in Guatemala and raised in both California

and Georgia. His SAT scores were 390, and math 370. Upon examination of her entering COMPASS test scores (78 English, 64 reading, 51 math) she was put into two remedial courses. She was placed in math 0097 and reading 0099.

Zena is a twenty-one year old African American female from Camilla, Georgia. She is an early childhood education major. Her ACT scores were reading of 14, math 14, and English 13. Upon examination of her entering COMPASS test scores (56 English, 73 reading) she was put into two remedial courses. She was placed in math 0097 and reading 0099.

McKenzie is a twenty year old African American female from Early County Georgia. She is an early childhood education major. She was born in Miami, Florida and raised in both Florida and Georgia. Her SAT scores were 380 verbal and 370 math. Upon examination of her entering COMPASS test scores, she was put into two remedial courses. She was placed in math 0097 and reading 0099.

Organizing Field Texts

All of the stories collected are confidential and kept in a locked file cabinet in my office located on the campus of Darton College. The only other person that was given access to the information was my dissertation chair. Interview outcomes were analyzed quickly. Taped interviews were transcribed and typed for coding. I entered the data into my personal computer and store it on its hard drive. A hard copy of the information was stored in a secure file cabinet in my office.

Analyzing Field Texts

I used thematic analysis as outlined by Shank, 2002 analyze the field text.

This included looking for themes or particular patterns in the research. I listened to the tapes and transcribed the five interviews. As I heard or recognized themes or patterns, I would write these down in my researcher's journal. In order for the researcher to become familiar with the data, Marshal and Rossman (1999) recommend multiple listenings.

Establishing patterns and themes was the second step in the process. I read each participant's transcript with the purpose of uncovering patterns and themes. More patterns emerged from reading the transcripts. After reading the transcript, I had a better understanding of the themes and patterns of the research. I was able to see that some of the themes were a part of the pattern and not patterns themselves.

Step three was coding the field texts. Field text coding is the "formal representation of analytical thinking" (Marshal & Rossman, 1999, p. 155). Each pattern was given a coding theme which was represented by different highlighted colors. Several themes were common throughout the transcripts while others were random. All themes were coded regardless of randomness.

The fourth step involved looking for connections between the themes or patterns and the interview questions. Step five involved alternate explanations. Marshall and Rossman (1999) state, "Alternate explanations always exist; the researcher must search for, identify, and describe them, and then demonstrate how the explanation offered is the most plausible of all" (p. 157). I gave explanations for any contradictions in previous understandings. For example, students used the term volunteer work interchangeably for service learning. I noted the proper terminology within brackets in the transcript. Writing the report is the last step in the process. I chose to present the individual interviews in

transcript format with my commentary following each narrative. This created a picture of the collected field texts.

Transforming Stories into Research Text

This dissertation study sheds light on the possibilities and the cultural advantages offered by using service learning to bridge the gap with a group of pre-service teachers enrolled in a developmental reading course. The use of service learning embodies the integration of community service with academic skills and structured reflection (Jennings, 2001). Hence, I posit that service learning gives students a reason to use the information that they are required to learn. Furthermore, I contend that the use of service learning will instill a greater appreciation for reading, others, and education in general. Creating and requiring service learning opportunities in an area related to reading is a great way of achieving this goal. Service learning experiences will also open students' minds and allow them to think critically while transferring information from the classroom to the service site and ultimately everyday life.

Composing Field Texts

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1, Introduction, is devoted to the context of the study involving the research questions pertinent to the this study involving pre-service teachers and their service learning experience. Included also are my autobiographical roots, which contain the story of why I am connected to this work both personally and professionally. A participant profile is provided as well as participant selection. A discussion of my theoretical framework, which is informed by the works of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Anna Julia Cooper, and W.E.B. DuBois is included

in this chapter. Significance of the study and an outline of the dissertation concluded the chapter.

Chapter 2, Literature Review, explores past research involving issues surrounding service learning, my theoretical framework,. The review also includes an examination and review of seven major bodies of literature: (a) service learning, (b) the reconceptualization, (c) developmental education, (d) raising consciousness, (e) building community, (f) social justice, and (g) transformation. A summary of the literature review is given at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 3, Story Collection Method, provides a brief explanation of the theoretical framework, which is based the works of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Anna Julia Cooper, and W.E.B. DuBois. Also included is a brief explanation of community based narrative inquiry. Composing field texts include detailed school portraiture, participant selection, and five participant profiles. An explanation of the usage of participant and teacher reflective journals is provided as well. The chapter follows with organizing and analyzing field texts, transforming text fields, and composing field texts.

Chapter 4, Data Representation: Student Interviews, contains the participants Interviews, which are presented in transcript format. These stories are also supported by the researcher's journal and interview observations, which are presented following the participant's responses to question sets.

Chapter 5, Conclusions, presents the findings of the study. These are: (1) A positive sense of building community relationships is demonstrated through preservice teachers' transformative plans for future volunteering as new cultural workers. (2) Preservice teachers that begin college in developmental reading program understand the

feeling of oppression and the need for social justice regardless of their ethnicity. (3)

Preservice teachers develop a critical outlook towards the teaching profession and social justice issues. (4) Sharing stories, observations, and reflection raises preservice teachers' critical consciousness and empowers them to transfer newly acquired knowledge to their future classrooms. (5) A positive view of service and building community is directly linked to the influence of the family. (6) Preservice teachers show signs of transformative development as cultural workers through classroom observations, and service learning. The chapter concludes with the limitations of the study and implications.

CHAPTER 4

DATA REPRESENTATION: STUDENT INTERVIEWS

This chapter presents the participants' experiences with service learning. It also presents all data reported by the participants. As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of the study was to explore using service learning to raise the critical coconsciousness of students in developmental education. In deciding to present my data, I chose to represent my information through narrative and story telling. I chose this method because of my commitment to the students in the study and the fact that I found no similar studies in the literature review. The voices of the students must be shared for the benefit of all. The students in this study were all pre-service teacher education majors that were previously enrolled in my developmental reading course. The course was unique because it had a service learning component. This research is important because remedial education in the academy is a contentious issue. This study adds to the potential value and benefits of using service learning in combination with remedial education. A large part of students enrolled in developmental education programs are retained on campuses across the nation. They are also a great percentage of those that eventually progress to graduation at both community colleges, and universities each year.

Five students participated in this study. Their narratives are presented beginning with Kathy, Denise, Alberto, Zena, and ending with McKenzie. Each participant was able to choose their own pseudonym.

Stories were collected individually and later transcribed for coding and analysis. The purpose of the interviews was to ascertain students' attitudes towards the service learning experience, being in developmental education, and the potential impact of

service learning on their attitudes towards teaching. All of the participants were given a choice of three locations for their interview: home, the college, or a location of their choosing. All participants chose to be interviewed in the conference room of the main office of the F- building on the Darton College campus.

The presentation of stories for each participant will be given in the following categories: service learning experience, likes, and dislikes concerning service learning, self- noted changes, and future volunteerism. The narratives are listed in the order the participants were interviewed. Preceding the participants' responses to questions concerning service learning, is a narrative profile to acquaint the reader with the participants. Each participant responded to the same interview prompts. Some were asked follow up questions. Follow up questions are italicized in the transcript. The transcribed interviews are written exactly as quoted by the participants. Thus, some grammatical errors and colloquialisms are present in this section of the dissertation because all participants did not speak in complete sentences, or use Standard English. They used a language reflective of their cultural upbringing and state regional location. Some corrections are noted in brackets after the error. My brief reflective thoughts and observations from the interviews are italicized and included in sections following the students' responses to questions.

Participant Profiles

Kathy

***Kathy** is a twenty year old European American female from Baker County Georgia. She is an early childhood education major. She lives at home with her family and commutes to campus everyday. Kathy was a member of a winning high school*

basketball team. She entered Darton College as a traditional student. Her SAT scores were 420, and math 450. Upon examination of her entering COMPASS test scores (78 English, reading 68) she was put into one remedial course. She was placed in reading 0099.

In class, Kathy was quite conscientious. Her assignments were always on time and she would constantly volunteer to read aloud. She passed the course the first time she took the developmental reading course. Her final COMPASS exit score was 82 out of a total of 99 possible points.

Denise

***Denise** is a twenty-one year old African American female from Cairo, Georgia. She is a middle grades education major. Denise lives in an apartment located one mile from campus. She comes from a big family. She has five brothers and two sisters. Her twin brother is counted among the group. Denise was also a high school basketball player. She entered Darton College as a traditional student. Her SAT scores were 310 verbal, and math 350. Upon examination of her entering COMPASS test scores (22 English, 32 reading, 18 math) she was put into three remedial courses. She was placed in math 0097 and reading 0099. She made the decision to take the remedial English course the next semester.*

In class, Denise would infrequently daydream. She shared that she was homesick but could not go home because she worked on the weekends. This daydreaming would happen whether we were engrossed in individual or group assignments. It took her two semesters to pass the course. Her final COMPASS exit score was 82 out of a total of 99

possible points.

Alberto

Alberto is a twenty year old Hispanic American male from Cairo, Georgia. He is a Spanish education major. Alberto was born in Guatemala and raised in both California and Georgia. He lives in an apartment located two miles from campus. He entered Darton College as a traditional student. During high school he was a soccer player. His SAT scores were 390, and math 370. Upon examination of her entering COMPASS test scores (78 English, 64 reading, 51 math) she was put into two remedial courses. She was placed in math 0097 and reading 0099.

In class, I would often have to re-direct Alberto's attention from his e-mail device by speaking to him in Spanish. He passed the course the first time he took the developmental reading course. His final exit score was 87 out of 99 possible points. Alberto returned to the Learning Support Division for remediation in association with the reading portion of the Regents' Test. He was successful after he received remediation for the exam.

In our conversations, he shared that he would like to get married later this summer. He worries about whether marrying will impact his teaching aspirations. From the countenance on his face, he is conflicted between his love for his fiancé and the uncertainty of their future goals. If necessary, he plans to leave school for a brief period to take a position as a manager of a Dominos Pizza restaurant. No matter what he decides, his strong family background will contribute significantly to the decision making process.

Zena

***Zena** is a twenty-one year old African American female from Camilla, Georgia. She is an early childhood education major. She lives at home with her family. Zena has two brothers and one sister. She commutes to campus each day. She entered Darton College as traditional student. Her ACT scores were reading of 14, math 14, and English 13. Upon examination of her entering COMPASS test scores (56 English, 73 reading) she was put into two remedial courses. She was placed in math 0097 and reading 0099.*

In class, Zena was successful the first time she took the developmental reading course. Her final COMPASS exit reading score was 81 out of 99 possible points. She has returned to the Learning Support Division for reading remediation help in connection with the Regents' Reading Test. She is eligible to graduate, but if she is not successful this semester, she will not receive her degree. This will be her third attempt at taking the Regents' Reading Test. In many cases, like this one, students transfer without receiving their degree and they continue to try to pass the test at their new institution.

McKenzie

***McKenzie** is a twenty year old African American female from Early County Georgia. She is an early childhood education major. She was born in Miami, Florida and raised in both Florida and Georgia. She lives in an apartment located three miles from campus. McKenzie is from a small family. She is an only child. She entered Darton College as traditional student. Her SAT scores were 380 verbal and 370 math. Upon examination of her entering COMPASS test scores, she was put into two remedial courses. She was placed in math 0097 and reading 0099.*

During her interview, she paused quite often before formulating her responses. McKenzie had to take the developmental reading course twice. In class, each time she passed the course but not the state mandated standardized test (COMPASS). Her final exit score was 88 out of 99.

Service Learning Experience

1. How was your experience of service learning?
2. What was the best thing you experienced during the service learning project?
3. If you had to apply one descriptive word to your service learning project experience, what would that term be?
4. What were some of the things you learned while doing the service learning project?

The purpose of the first set of interview questions was to determine what the participants thought about their service learning experience. Their responses provided the evidence necessary for the continued improvement of service learning as a tool of cultural understanding. All teaching tools must be examined periodically for effectiveness. I asked them to reflect on In this section, I have included critical parts of each participant's interview.

Interview with Kathy (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie (Researcher): How was your service learning experience when you took the Read 99 course?

Kathy: It was enjoyable. I liked it. It was interesting. It got me actually into school where I wanted to be. It put my foot in, so I enjoyed it. The kids loved it and I actually continued. After the certain amount of time we were required to do, I continued on through the semester and I finished reading.

Melanie: What was the best thing you experienced during the service learning project?

Kathy: My job.

Melanie: *Tell me about your job.*

Kathy: When I said I put my foot it, I – being in the school, they saw that I could – that I actually liked being there and I liked doing things, and so when a job opportunity came available, the principal came to me, who she thought would fit the job best.

Melanie: If you had to name or apply one descriptive word to your service learning project experience, what would that term be?

Kathy: Enjoyable, or time well spent.

Melanie: What were some of the things you learned while doing the service learning project?

Kathy: I actually read to, two classes that sent an e-mail back saying they would like someone to come in and read and then one of the third grade teachers, she asked me if I would like to continue reading to her class because they liked it. So, I did. I would go in once a week and I would read a book and I would continue reading. I just read to the class whatever they [the teachers] felt was appropriate and that I thought they might like, or whatever. I would just read to them.

Melanie: *Would you ask the students questions or things like that about – to see whether or not they were listening?*

Kathy: We would kind of talk about it to kind of catch up before we started reading again. We'd kind of talk about it. I'd let them tell me what was going on before we started reading again – before we started reading that day.

Melanie: *Was there anything specific that you learned during the service learning portion of this particular course; something that you wouldn't have known if you hadn't had the experience?*

Kathy: That's a hard question. I'm not sure. I can't say that I wouldn't have known this, but I kind of got more in depth that the kids are very different in their – their choice of books and how they pay attention are different. I think that's probably one of the things that I learned.

Melanie: *Tell me how their decision making is different or their choices are different?*

Kathy: Certain students that would want to read a series of books. I can't think of the name of them. I know, the Junie B. Jones Series. I would read this on days when the students could pick the book, but the boys would maybe

want something a little bit different. So it was – they just had different choices, I guess, as to what they wanted.

Kathy was prompt to the interview. She made time for the interview in the middle of her workday. She arrived ten minutes before we were to begin. She was dressed in traditional college attire; blue jeans and a t-shirt topped off with a sun visor. Her attire is surprising and important because during the developmental reading course, she wore business suits because she thought that she wanted to become a business education teacher. Her attire indicated to me that she had made a change. She seemed to be a little anxious at the beginning of the session, but as the session moved along, she warmed up.

In my conversations with Kathy, she indicated that she wants to get married in the next year. She knows that her fiancé does not like his job, but he is willing to stick with it to provide for them. She currently likes working as a paraprofessional but she is aware of the fact that the position does not pay enough for her to move out on her own.

Interview with Denise (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: How was your experience of service learning?

Denise: Well, the volunteer work. It helped me out. It really let me – I mean, when I first had gone I just – my major is education and I really didn't know what grade I wanted to teach and when I volunteered to help in the middle school, that helped me out a lot.

Melanie: What was the best thing you experienced during the service learning project?

Denise: I'm a shy person and that helped me get over my shyness with them because I was really nervous before I started reading.

Melanie: If you had to name on apply one descriptive word to your service learning project experience, what would that term be?

Denise: It was fun.

Melanie: What were some of the things that you learned doing the service learning project?

Denise: It helped me out a lot and it let me know that I can – like, when I would get ready to teach, that I can stand up in front of my class and teach.

In conversations with Denise, she was always quiet and shy. She usually speaks in a low tone of voice. During her interview, she smiled a lot and seemed to be completely engrossed in the conversation. She was visibly happy when she discussed the service learning experiences in the classroom. Her response to the questions above show that she enjoyed the service experience. She was also able to determine which age group of students she wants to teacher.

Interview with Alberto (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: How was your experience of service learning?

Alberto: I felt comfortable there with the little kids more than I would adults, so it was – it was better because it made me decide more on what decision I would later make. Yeah. Just the little kids were more amazed at things that you teach them. When I went and read to them I read to two classes and they enjoyed it. They paid attention and it wasn't what people always say. "They don't- they aren't going to listen." They enjoyed it and they wanted me to come back again. I came back once [after the semester service learning project] and that's it and I haven't been able to go back and that was – I enjoyed the little kids. I'd rather do elementary than high school.

Melanie: What was the best thing you experienced during the service learning project?

Alberto: I think the working together groups. Working together in groups on some of the projects we had and knowing that I can do my best when under pressure, and when something is due real soon, I go in and take care of it real quick.

Melanie: If you had to name on apply one descriptive word to your service learning project experience, what would that term be?

Alberto: Wonderful.

Melanie: What were some of the things that you learned doing the service learning project?

Alberto: I was a little worried about it, just because it was another group of new people and plus, there is some teachers there that are already teachers, so that's what I'm trying to become like, and I was like, okay, but, with the assignments that we had to read in front of the class to peers of our own age, it kind of made me feel even more comfortable. I was like, if I can do it in class, I can do it at the elementary school, and once I got done with one class, the other class was easier. It was good.

Alberto was quite animated during his interview. He was passionate in his expressions about service learning and teaching. From observation, it was apparent that he thought about each answer before voicing his options. This was evident in his expression. He has played multiple supporting roles in major campus play productions. He is also a member of the community soccer team that meets and plays on the Darton College campus. These facts support the idea that he is an outgoing person this is what makes is comment concerning partnering noteworthy. His responses to the questions indicate that he had some reservations about students' classroom behavior but through service learning, the myth was dispelled.

Interview with Zena (Williams Thornton, 2007)

Melanie: How was your experience of service learning?

Zena: Well, when I was in that class, we broke down the basics of reading tools and it made me understand it better because I had weakness in reading on timing on it, because I would have to reread the passage over to make me understand it better. That class broke it down better. I got a better understanding.

Melanie: What was the best thing you experienced during the service learning project?

Zena:

Melanie: If you had to name on apply one descriptive word to your service learning project experience, what would that term be?

Zena: Academic.

Melanie: What were some of the things that you learned doing the service learning project?

Zena: When I read for the kids, it was like real easy books, you know. With the smaller kids, I understood it better. Because they were smaller kids, you had to maintain their focus kids, because they're smaller and – how they'd be moving around and stuff, and really put a book that they understand, a book that they like to read, to make them focus better and understand.

Of all the participants, Zena seemed to be the most nervous on the surface. During the interview, it was difficult to her responses. I was concerned about whether her voice was being recorded. In conversation with her, she expressed the idea that she thought that she was going to be video taped for this interview. When she arrived, her fears were allayed because the interview session was being audio taped and not video taped. Zena is a beautiful girl that other students like to hang around therefore, this shyness surprised me.

Interview with McKenzie (Williams Thornton, 2007)

Melanie: How was your experience of service learning?

McKenzie: Since I'm a teacher education major, it showed me a lot like what goes on the classroom, but it was fine.

Melanie: What was the best thing you experienced during the service learning project?

McKenzie: I'd say the best thing was just being in the classroom, knowing that that's what I wanted to do with that age group.

Melanie: If you had to name or apply one descriptive word to your service learning project experience, what would that term be?

McKenzie: Educational.

Melanie: What were some of the things that you learned doing the service learning project?

McKenzie: How some children aren't going to listen to you, probably because they know you, and some of them are, because they're looking up to you. So leadership was the number one thing I learned.

Interviewer: *Name any examples of leadership that occurred while you were there in the classroom?*

McKenzie: I have a cousin who was in that classroom and when I first got there, they were speaking to me, you know, running up to me, like – 'cause they knew me. So, I had to tell them, "Have a seat. I'm about to do something for you". Some of them didn't want to listen, I guess because they knew me, but I had to tell them, "You're in the classroom. You have to listen to me."

Of all the participants, McKenzie was the most eager to be interviewed. Before I could call her to remind her about our appointment, she called me to confirm. This is an admirable quality. It is also one that I would expect in a student that holds two jobs. She works on campus and in a local department store. Her responses to these questions revealed her observation and acknowledgement of the use of leadership skills in the classroom. This observation is evidence of McKenzie thinking critically about the day to day operation of a classroom.

Service Learning Likes and Dislikes

1. What didn't you like about the service learning project?
2. If you could have changed one thing about the service learning project, what would it be?

Interview with Kathy (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: What didn't you like about the service learning project?

Kathy: No. I – I can't say there isn't because I enjoyed going to the school. I enjoyed being with the students and the fact that they were at the age level that I could talk to them and they weren't little and having to get on to them constantly about listening. They wanted to hear and it was good to know that you were wanted to be there. They wanted you to be there, because I would walk down the hallways, just being there when I wasn't supposed to or – and having the kids yell out, "Hey, Miss Kathy," and just

that is – I enjoyed that a lot. So, I don't think there was anything I didn't like.

Melanie: If you could have changed one thing about the service learning project, what would it be?

Kathy: Knowing me, because I enjoyed it, I would probably add more to it. That may not work well with others who may not enjoy it as much as I did, but I think I would add more to it because I enjoyed volunteering. Maybe volunteering at a hospital because a lot – we have a lot of nursing students here, or helping out with Darton, something that they may have, because when a teacher offers for us to do extra credit, to volunteer for something or to go do something, I jump at the chance to do it, not only because I want the extra credit, but because it gives me a reason to take me away from other responsibilities or things that I may have planned.

Melanie: *How did your family take it when you told them that you were volunteering?*

Kathy: I didn't. It was kind of mean. My friends thought it was good. They thought it was really good that I was volunteering, but my family, I didn't tell. They ask how school goes and I say fine and that's the end of the conversation. They try [to pry]. I just kind of cut it off. I just – I don't know. It's not something I just do. My family's just not the type where you just sit down at a dinner table and talk about things. I just try to leave it to my friends.

Melanie: *Is there anything that you want to add about the service learning experience or for future students will have to take developmental reading?*

Kathy: To not get nervous. For the students who are going to take Reading 99, not get nervous about the idea or get agitated at the fact that you have to go and volunteer somewhere. It may actually end up becoming something that you like, or it may help you as it did me. It helped me get a job. It showed them [school administrators] that I wanted to do this and so I was offered a job and that helped me because I don't know where I would be at if it wasn't for my job. It's one of my main priorities.

Melanie: *What job did you get at the school?*

Kathy: The STAR teacher, the aftercare worker, and right now, at this point, I'm also doing K3 teachers aide which is – I enjoy STAR a little bit better, but it's a job and I love it and hopefully, I'll have a job there when finish my four year[degree]. So it – I'm just keeping my foot in the door because you're more apt to get hired by someone if you are already working there than someone new. That's my thing.

There was nothing that Kathy disliked about the service learning experience. When Kathy spoke of her family her countenance changed from one of excitement to melancholy. She considers her friends to be a replacement for the family in which she was born. She did not share the reason for her feelings. According to her response, the support of her friends made her feel like she was doing something worthwhile.

Interview with Denise (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: What didn't you like about the service learning project?

Denise: No. I wouldn't change anything because I liked it.

Melanie: If you could have changed one thing about the service learning project, what would it be?

Denise: It's a great thing to do, so if I had to change anything, I'd probably change to use more time probably.

Melanie: *Did you tell your family about what you were doing?*

Denise: I told my mom. I told her that I wanted to go to the middle school and volunteer with one of my old teachers and read to the class and just sit there and watch her and she said told me that yeah, that probably would be a great thing.

Melanie: *How did that feel coming to school knowing that you were going to have to take a reading class in college?*

Denise: I was like why do I have to take these classes. I thought I already took them in high school, reading class. I mean, like some stuff, like I said, that I had forgotten, it brought it back and I remembered some of the stuff from high school that we had to do. Well, taking a reading class, it really helped me out because like you know, what I did in high school and like some of the stuff I had forgot. I mean, when I took the reading class, I was remembering some of the stuff that I had already taken, but I didn't really think anything special about reading class.

Denise liked everything about the service learning experience. She could not think of anything that she would change. Her mother's enthusiasm towards the service

learning project helped Denise endure the disappointment of being placed in a remedial reading course.

Interview with Alberto (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: What didn't you like about the service learning project?

Alberto: I kind of enjoyed the fact that I got the chance to go out and do something new. So, there was nothing I didn't like about that.

Melanie: If you could have changed one thing about the service learning project, what would it be?

Alberto: Maybe team up with someone else because I know – I think we were all supposed to do our service learning and some – like I said, if you have people who don't like doing something like that and then they go by themselves, I think that would really hurt them, but if you partner up and work in partners of two, and you have somebody else going with you, so you – you feel confident, because at least you know somebody and you have to help and complete the project together. I think – I think that would benefit the ones who can't do in front of people type things. So, you can combine to all people and working together or friends sometimes can get it done better. As long as they have somebody supporting them or alongside knowing that they do it, I think that should work out. So, that's what I would do.

Melanie: *Tell me how you felt about starting out your academic career being in a developmental reading class.*

Alberto: It was fine to me because it helped me with the whole reading skills, but it kind of put me behind with some classes I couldn't take, but it was all right, because now that I've taken the reading thing, now I don't have to struggle through my English class or my literature classes like that. So, it worked out for the best.

Melanie: *Did you ever involve your family in the reading? Did you tell them about what you were doing?*

Alberto: I told them that because I didn't do too good, I had to get better on my reading skills and things like that. That was fine, as long as it helped out and I mean, when I got it done and everything, I told them. It was like I could take more reading classes. I think my reading improved when I read

things now. So, I read a little faster now, instead of taking a lot of time with it. So, they were fine with it.

Interview with Zena (Williams Thornton, 2007)

Melanie: What didn't you like about the service learning project?

Zena: Yeah. I was kind of nervous about that because I'm kind of shy, but as I went there, the students were smaller than me, so that gave me the courage to do it.

Melanie: If you could have changed one thing about the service learning project, what would it be?

Zena: I'm not sure.

Melanie: *How did you feel when you got ready to come to Darton College and you found out that you had to take a reading class in college?*

Zena: Because I didn't know any better. I was a freshman. You know, I didn't know why. I didn't know there was learning support classes in college. I thought it was probably like regular classes that made me –

Melanie: *Made you a what?*

Zena: A failure.

Melanie: *But, after taking the class, how did you feel?*

Zena: Comfortable, more knowledgeable. Not strange at all.

Much like Alberto, Zena was apprehensive about being in the classroom. She has a deep desire to be a teacher but she is shy. The service learning experience helped her to begin overcoming this personal difficulty. Her response to the questions also revealed her feelings of failure from being placed in developmental courses.

Interview with McKenzie (Williams Thornton, 2007)

Melanie: What didn't you like about the service learning project?

McKenzie: No. It was fine.

- Melanie: *Anything else you want to add as far as service learning goes?*
- McKenzie: I look at it[teaching]with a different view. It's more than I'm learning now, since I'm in the education classes that I didn't know before.
- Melanie: *Give me an example.*
- McKenzie: The different tests that you have to take. Like before [you can go to school] you have to take different tests before you get into a four year institution. Then, you have to take the second part of that test before graduating from a four year institution. What's some more stuff we learned? The different shortages in the teachers in Georgia. I just think that more people should major in teaching because you're always going to need teachers most of the time and nurses. Those two fields, y'all going to need something, but like they were saying the middle school shortages are in math and science. I know a lot of people are just majoring in that and early childhood education, but I think more people should major in teaching. Like the different genders. Like you wouldn't normally see a male in an elementary school classroom. They mostly teach middle school or high school or college. The different races in elementary school. Most of the teachers are Caucasian females.
- Melanie: *How do you feel about that and did you see that in the school that you visited?*
- McKenzie: Well, it was a mixture in the school that I visited, but I went to two different elementary schools [as a child]. The first elementary school I went to was in Miami and most of my teachers were Caucasian or Mexican, something like that, but none of them were African American. Then, when I came here, well, to Calhoun County, it was a mixture of teachers and I see that growing now as I've graduated from the Calhoun County School System. There's a mixture of teachers.
- Melanie: *When you were younger and you were in school in Miami, how did you feel going to school in a school where none of the teachers looked like you?*
- McKenzie I thought all teachers – I mean, I thought African Americans couldn't be teachers. That's what I thought. Because I only say, you know, Caucasian teachers. I'd say the best thing was just being in the classroom, knowing that that's what I wanted to do with that age group. Educational. How some children aren't going to listen to you, probably because they know you, and some of them are, because they're looking up to you. So leadership was the number one thing I learned. I have a cousin who was in that classroom and when I first got there, they were speaking to me, you know, running up to me, like – 'cause they knew me. So, I had to tell them,

"Have a seat. I'm about to do something for you". Some of them didn't want to listen, I guess because they knew me, but I had to tell them, "You're in the classroom. You have to listen to me."

Melanie: If you could have changed one thing about the service learning project, what would it be?

McKenzie: Probably go to a bigger school. Because I want to teach in a bigger school than anywhere around here. I want to teach in Atlanta. That would have given me a better experience of what I wanted to do. A big school.

Interviewer: Why Atlanta?

McKenzie: I like the city. I like the fast pace of Atlanta, the different attractions. I just always wanted to move to Atlanta.

McKenzie shared her experience of being an African American child in an elementary school where there were no African American teachers on the faculty. This narrative gives a voice to children that have gone through school without seeing teachers of their race during their years of schooling. This voice is relevant to the review of literature. It will aide mainstream teachers in their cultural sensitivity in the classroom.

Self-Noted Change

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How do you think doing this project affected the way you look at teaching now?2. Would you recommend that other classes involve students in a service learning project? |
|---|

The purpose of the third set of questions was to determine whether or not the participants believed that their service learning experience changed their outlook concerning the field of teaching. Further, the participants' responses would aid in ascertaining whether they would be able to transfer their experience to students outside of teacher education. Being able to give examples of how service learning can be used in other classes serves two purposes. It demonstrates students' transference of knowledge concerning service learning as a teaching tool. A student sharing their service learning

experiences with other students provides the best advertising for raising consciousness and cultural understanding. The responses for the five participants follow.

Interview with Kathy (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: How do you think doing this project affected the way you look at teaching now?

Kathy: Yes. I will probably have set a time once a week to read to my students, just to kind of relax, get away from the study and given them something to – just kind of relax and – it helps them with AR [accelerated reader], because the books that we read, they were able to take AR tests on them and so not only were they reading individually, but I was also reading the book for them. So, I think it's good both ways. They enjoyed it, and they could relax, get away from their schooling and having to do seat work and just kind of sit back, and listen.

It [service learning] helped me to know how things go because I observed things. I would come in a little before it was time and I could observe a little bit about how the teachers were doing things. It just – it helps you to get comfortable and you're not going through school and then at the end of your four years, going in and trying to teach a class and you don't really know anything. It just gets you comfortable with the setting and the fact that I'm comfortable with it now and I still have, I don't know how many years left, it's just – I think it will help me with my school. The service project, it put my foot in the door and now I'm in schools and I'm working with the school system and I enjoy it.

Melanie: *When you started out, how did you feel about having to take READ 0099?*

Kathy: I was not happy. I was more or less ashamed because I'm good in reading and the fact that I was in reading, it kind of upset me because I feel that when I took the test if I would have paid attention and done a little bit better, then I would not have had to take the reading, but the fact that I did take it and the ways that it helped me, as far as just the volunteer reading, and it just kind of – it wasn't – it was a good thing because it retaught me all the things that I needed to know about reading and it's things that I could use in my English classes, and stuff. I was really more or less embarrassed that I had to take it because I'm not – I don't think I'm bad at reading. I just didn't do very well on the test.

Melanie: Would you recommend that other classes involve students in a service learning project?

Kathy: Yes. It actually kind of benefited me because I am pre-service teacher education major, but still, I would have never thought that I could go into a school and just read to children. I would have never thought that I could just go in. I thought they would have some kind of rule against that, having strangers come into their school, but I mean I think it would benefit them more. Maybe if they saw that they could do that, and then maybe they could try whatever education – whatever major they're going into, they can try and volunteer there. I mean, even if they think they don't want to do it, once they get in there, and they see that they're helping someone, they just, – I think that they'll feel good about it. They'll – even if it's just that one time. I think it would help them as far as – some people never volunteer for anything because they don't know where to start, but if they're made to do it in one of their classes and they kind of see, "Oh, I can do this and this is how I do it", then maybe they'll be apt to volunteer more in other things.

According to Kathy's responses, she gained a feeling of empowerment through the service experience. She now appears to be armed with confidence in her ability to be a teacher. It is also worth noting that she shared a feeling of being marginalized by being placed in a developmental reading course. Being placed in developmental education courses was Kathy's first experience with being marginalized.

Interview with Denise (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: How do you think doing this project affected the way you look at teaching now?

Denise: Well, it helped me understand why. I mean, I know there's a lot of shortage of teachers right now and, I mean teachers, they really don't get paid enough for the work that they do and I think that they should be able to get paid more because they do a lot of work, teachers do. Well, some classrooms have like about thirty or forty students in one class because they don't have enough teachers to like, to help out. Like, you don't see any African Americans. You don't see too many in schools. I like wouldn't have thought about that, but I think they should get more money – get paid more than they are now.

Melanie: Would you recommend that other classes involve students in a service learning project?

Interview with Alberto (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: How do you think doing this project affected the way you look at teaching now?

Alberto: It gave me a better point of view. It gave me a better point of view of teachers. I think teachers are wonderful just – as long as they don't see it as a job and they just want to get paid and they're just doing this to get paid. They got to do it because it's something they want to do. People always say that you have teachers who tell you not to be teachers, maybe because they don't enjoy what they're doing or maybe because it's too much for them, but going over there and seeing teachers not yelling and not losing control of the kids, and it's like, okay, well, this isn't what people say it is. I'm not going to get scared about it. Just do it, and then that's what it did – added more confidence to the decision and to how I would teach. Since then, I've done great.
I'm always amazed. I like learning about new backgrounds because I like new things. When I over there, the first thing they asked was where was I from. Of course, they would think something and I'm like, "No. I'm actually not even from there."

Melanie: *Where did they think you were from?*

Alberto: They either thought I was Cuban or Mexican. I was like, "No. Central America. Below Mexico". They were like, "Where's that at?", because it's a little country that people don't know about and I told them I'm from Guatemala, but we all look alike, I said, so there's no problem. People need to learn to accept that. It's kind of hard when there are so many countries that look kind of the same because you can get offended because people can mistake you for something else, but people do kind of realize and you can't get upset about that. It's not their fault that they can't tell what you are. So many people look the same.

I like learning a lot of people's backgrounds. I enjoy it. It gives me more perspective of where they come from and it kind of helps me, because if I know where they come from and how they see things, and if I was to teach to them, it kind of gets me working to how am I going to teach him now that I know how he feels about this, how he feels about that. So, I found ways to reach them and to get them to understand. Other than that, on backgrounds, it's still the same. I enjoy backgrounds, all cultures. I have no problem with any culture so – and being a minority kind of, I think, pushes that – the disliking of other people. Being a minority pushes that. It gives you a better understanding of other minorities or other things like that.

Melanie: *Did you ever have an opportunity to point out your country of origin on a map for the children?*

Alberto: She had a globe and half of the students said they knew where it was and I was like, "Okay," and others said they didn't know. So, then when I asked the side that knew where the country was at, they would totally not have it right, so I'm like – the lady had a globe and she pointed it out and she was – "It's right below Mexico. It's in Central America," and all that, and that's when they were like, "Oh, we didn't even know there was a country like that." I was like, "That's all right."

Melanie: Would you recommend that other classes involve students in a service learning project?

Alberto: Yeah. It's not all just for reading. So, I think that's what'll help a lot, is your personal experience. This will help and actually hearing from somebody who did service and the examples helps.

Melanie: *Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience?*

Just that it's been a wonderful experience. I think if I would have never been in the class, I wouldn't have done the service learning, I might still be in the point of wanting to be a high school teacher, and I'm dealing with little kids here. If I wouldn't have done that when I would have been asked to do the Spanish thing, it kind of would have been a little hard for me to do, but I was like if I can deal with little kids, how hard can adults be? So, that's what helped me there. Just the fact that the little kids wanted me to come back again to read because they enjoyed that and they said that they really don't get that many people to come out there because apparently they scare them off or something. As long as we understand one another and we know – if I know about you and you know about me, we're bound to like one another and I think that's what I enjoy the best.

See, [I know] that's really hard, especially hard because, I mean, that's the South, and it has its history. I mean – but people who are up to the age and up to the times, of course, they see things differently, but you have those people who are still living in the past and still see things how they used to see it. It becomes harder for, I guess, a minority group, and for us, but to me, it's like I'm not from here, so to be accustomed to another culture, I think that's what people need I'm like, you have to understand what's that class? Culture diversity. I took that class and it kind of changed the way I saw things and with me being new here, I feel like gosh – I don't feel like I should be treated differently from everyone, because I was born in Guatemala, but then my momma came and they brought me back after two months of being born, and since then, I've been here and I've taken all the steps to become a citizen and all that. I work and, pay taxes just like everybody does here. Just the only difference is I don't really deal with the history, any discrimination. I am a minority. I've been discriminated against. So, with me knowing this and knowing that I like to get the

background first, see how they feel about situations. So, if I've got some people who see it in a positive way and then other people who see it negatively, you have to change the way you're going to teach them because now you – I think that's what some teachers feel like doing. They teach the [class] just the way they teach because that's how they've been teaching all their lives, especially the older teachers and once you have somebody that wants them to do something or change for them, they take an offensive and they don't want to change their way, but I think people have to at least accommodate – you know, students accommodate for the teachers.

Teachers should accommodate for them and make them understand and sometimes it take reading from personally – like talking about personal experience, for other kids for it finally go through, to click. There are teachers here that I think are just great teachers. No matter what style they teach, I'm able to learn. If I don't find you interesting, I kind of tend to doze off and just – I mean, I stay busy on the computer and I enjoy being on the computer and I enjoy any education program. I enjoy it. So, that's what I felt with the service learner. Other classes here, sometimes teachers make it so dull and boring that the students here don't care no more. They're ready to leave, don't show up to class. There are some teachers who people talk about, "Oh, they're so boring," but they're solid teachers, new and interesting if you just pay attention. You can't fall asleep in them and history class is usually the one that gets to me. I think the only bad teacher I've ever had was Miss Smith. I mean, she's a great lady, and all. Her style of teaching was not the greatest. She closed the door and then she lectured and lectured and lectured and lectured and everybody was ready to leave, and everybody did since then, I've gone through Mr. Marietta and he's just well, he's Mr. Marietta.

He has his opinion about everything and so he – but he keeps you awake because he tells you about [the way] he feels about it and then he asks you how you feel about it. So, it's like, well, okay and then everybody starts on this big old conversation about politics and I'm not a politic person, but he got me involved with a little bit more into that and then Mr. Gilbert, many people complained about him, but the guy – I don't know. I passed his class and I thought he was a wonderful teacher because he used his own experience in the military time, in his services that he did, in the class, which gives you a better point of view.

Alberto's responses to the questions were quite indepth.

Interview with Zena (Williams Thornton, 2007)

Melanie: How do you think doing this project affected the way you look at teaching now?

- Zena: Yeah, some of the things the same, because she had an organized class, and like she had symbols and all kind of games and learning – all of the materials that they could understand in a better way. I'm good at that, dealing with business, mental wise and a lot of people was telling me that it was a good idea if I changed my major to business and then I started to look into it and then I seen that regular teachers, they don't make as much, and then I seen the pay for the business administration and it was kind of the same, but then a little more than a teacher. But I still wanted to be a teacher, though.
- Melanie: *You mentioned teacher's pay. How much do think would be the appropriate amount for a teacher to make?*
- Zena: Well, putting up – not putting up, keeping those kids ,teaching those kids, I think they should make more than what they're getting paid because that – that depends on the area, too, where you're located, because some people get paid – I guess, the south, they don't get as much, but I think they should get paid – what's the average? I forget. It was like between \$23,000 to about \$30,000-something. About like that.
- Melanie: *Which region of the country do you think they pay teachers more?*
- Zena: Well, since I said that, like the upper states. They get paid more, but living is more expensive, so basically they're even about outright, because living is more expensive and they get paid more. It's just the same.
- Melanie: *How do you feel about the teacher shortage?*
- Zena: I believe there is shortage because of the pay. If they increased the teacher's pay, there wouldn't be no shortage because teachers, they go to school for a good period of time. They're taking a lot of tests that, in the end, it really doesn't pay off, because some majors, they don't take that many tests and they're getting paid more than the teachers are and they're the focus of America. They're teaching the folks. I think teachers should get paid more than they are now. I kind of got an aspect of what it's about and what I need to do and how I need to do it. I liked working with the small kids.
- Melanie: *Tell me why you like working with the small ones.*
- Zena: I just enjoy being around them. They're amazing to me, and I just like them.
- Melanie: *In what ways are they amazing?*
- Zena: How they ask you questions and stuff. I just had to be around them

because I had a lot of nieces and I had a smaller sister. I just like being around kids.

Melanie: *When you were in this class and you had to do service learning, did you tell your family anything about you having to go to the school?*

Zena: Yeah, see my mom – the school that I went to, my mom, she's the secretary. She knew all about it and the class that I went in, for the teacher, she was like; "She can come back any time. I enjoy her."

Melanie: Would you recommend that other classes involve students in a service learning project?

Zena: Yes, ma'am, because it will help them. It depends on what their major, right, because there's a lot of majors that deal with math, so it's – there should be a lot of companies, you know what I'm saying – that deal with math, whatever their field is, because there's a lot of technology that you have to know math, and then nursing, all that.

Interview with McKenzie (Williams Thornton, 2007)

Melanie: *How do you think doing this project affected the way you look at teaching now?*

McKenzie: It gave me the experience to see what I'm headed towards, what I'm going to be up for-the challenges of working with young children. My views on teaching didn't change, but it taught me that you have to be strict, especially working with young children because they're harder to maintain. Older children probably can understand better than them. You have to take a little more time with younger children because they're energetic and like to be on the go.

Melanie: *Anything else?*

McKenzie: There were more girls; more African Americans than any other race.

Melanie: Would you recommend that other classes involve students in a service learning project?

McKenzie: It'll [service learning] just gives them a head's up of what they're going to be approaching in their major, whatever. It just gives you the idea to do something different. It just puts you out there. Like, when I did reading – well, I read to the students. I was in a reading class, so it pertained to my class that I was reading in. Like [in] criminal justice, they should have people visiting and sitting in on probation visits and see what they're going to be up against.

Future Volunteerism

1. Has this experience encouraged you to volunteer more in your community?
2. In what ways were you changed by this volunteer project?

The purpose of the last set of interview questions was to determine whether students felt the need or desire to continue volunteering after the service learning experience. Furthermore, these questions were designed to give insight to each student's internal reflective process. It is important to know whether participants think they have changed or not and in what ways.

Interview with Kathy (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: Has this experience encouraged you to volunteer more in your community?

Kathy: I would say yes, for the area that I work in. I volunteer a lot. I'm up there [at the school]. I enjoy it. I enjoy being able to help people, being able to just go. Like, for instance, this morning. I was up at the school at about 8:00 cutting stuff for a teacher that she needed cut and – or, walking down the hallway and the teachers ask me to do something or they need something. I mean, I don't mind doing it. It's not like I have anything else to do.

Melanie: *Do you find yourself reading to other children?*

Kathy: I haven't been really reading a lot to my children. I have with my STAR [after school program] children. I sat down and actually read one day when it was raining and we read for probably about an hour straight constantly. They would give – I would finish a book and they'd give me another one off the shelf and I'd start reading it and I'd finish it and they'd give me another one and it wasn't – the children that wanted to listen were sitting around and the children that didn't, they were all sitting at the tables playing and they weren't loud. They weren't running and so I haven't really been reading that much, but I do, when I get a chance, read to my STAR children. We have someone who comes in every week to read to them.

Interview with Denise (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: Has this experience encouraged you to volunteer more in your

community?

Melanie: In what ways were you changed by this volunteer project?

Denise: Well, it helped me understand why – I mean, I know there's a lot of shortage of teachers right now and, I mean teachers, they really don't get paid enough for the work that they do and I think that they should be able to get paid more because they do a lot of work, teachers do. Well, some classrooms have like about thirty or forty students in one class because they don't have enough teachers to like, to help out. Like, you don't see any African Americans. You don't see too many in schools.

Melanie: *Okay, now you also mentioned something about the pay. Tell me, what do you think an adequate amount would be for teachers to make?*

Denise: Well, let's see. I like wouldn't have thought about that, but I think they should get more money – get paid more than they are now.

Melanie: *Knowing that there's a shortage and that the pay is not where it ought to be in your mind, what makes you want to be a teacher education major?*

Denise: Because I guess I like – I love kids. I love kids. I've – I mean, in high school, I used to take nursing classes, so I volunteered to work at nursing homes and like some times at school, they had like this program to go out and pick up trash out by the school, like crews or whatever. So, that's about it. Our teacher asked us to volunteer to help the younger students in the middle school, to help them out and that's about it. Oh yeah, we had to like help the patients, you know, bathe them and do their hair and help straighten out their room and maybe help them like doing some feedings. So, we had to do that.

Interview with Alberto (Williams Thornton, 2006)

Melanie: Has this experienced encouraged you to volunteer more in your community?

Alberto: I would think so. Since the service learning's been done and everything – through Darton, actually, I've taught two Spanish classes and this is going through the J building. Uh huh, Continuing Ed, and with the help of Miss Davis, of course, in class, she kind of knew what I could do and things I could not do, the things I could improve in and she gave me a challenge to go teach at Dawson to a small church. They were going on a mission trip and it was a Spanish country and they didn't really speak Spanish. All the people there were between the ages of 50 to 60. So, everybody was – it was an older crowd.

At first, I got a little worried because I knew older people don't really like to change or really like to – but these people were wonderful. When I got done the first session, the first Spanish class, I thought that was it, but most of them, all of them, they could read in Spanish. They're pronunciation – the accent went out of the way, so they actually spoke Spanish with a better accent and they were confident of what they could do, and then when they told me that they wanted me to come back – because I was working at school and they requested for me to come back. They said they wouldn't be able to do another class with somebody else. So, that kind of built my confidence up and it kind of made me happy about the fact that I did a great job that somebody would want me back. So, I went ahead and did that. Another time, and this time, second go-round, worked out even better, because now they know words. They know how to put sentences together. They basically will take this – four semesters to accomplish here, I was able to accomplish it over there in a four month session, maybe the equivalent of one whole semester or two semesters.

So, they're good to go and they'll be going on their trip in January. They call me just to talk in Spanish or other things like that, but not only that, it helped me build a relationship. I think that through the service learning, I also got patience, because you have to be patient with getting your work done. If you're going to go be with little kids, you have to be patient if they act up at first, but then eventually they'll settle down and pay attention. So, that's what helped over there. And then, I did a class that was with adult people which makes me just want to teach elementary, but go to school still to get my Masters. That way I can teach at the college level. College level would be a great thing to teach as well. But, after that, during the summer, I did a summer camp here at Darton and it was a Spanish camp for little kids. That worked out even better, too. So, I had a great experience.

Melanie: In what ways were you changed by this volunteer project?

Alberto: I think just the way I saw a kid's faith, because hearing other teachers talk about it, I want to be a teacher with kids and all that, saying walking in with a state of mind that these kids aren't really going to listen and they won't even care, and as soon as I walk in and I read to them and they're just looking so amazed and asking questions and getting along. I think the whole fact that I knew most of the things that they were into, like cartoons or the new toy or something – the fact that I knew what they were talking about, I think, made them feel more comfortable where it made them like me more and that's when I was like, well, I kind of have many things in common with the little kids. I feel pressured when I'm having to deal with people my own age. I don't know why, but my confidence goes up when

I'm dealing with the little kids because they're so amazed by what people know and they actually care.

Ever since – growing up, and it kind of kicked in when I was here, when I came – when I moved to Georgia. Before then, I lived in California and I wanted to be a cop, but when I came to Georgia, here is a new thing for me and so what ended up happening is that I wasn't in my comfort zone and so I went inside into like a shell and kept to myself, and by doing that, I kind of spent more time with my teachers than anybody else would. I would end my lunch early, go to class, and just talk to them.

At first, what I wanted to do was be a math teacher because many of them were math teachers. They kind of had a big influence on me with numbers, so they would always – I would always talk to them all about wonderful things. Then, my eighth grade, that's when I got a chance to become a teacher's aide, so I became a teacher's aide and I did that for two years for the migrant summer school that they have, and then when I got into tenth grade, they allowed me to teach a small Spanish class in the summer school. This was in Cairo, and so that's why I think, the more and more I taught – and not only that, outside of school, I was always having to teach people how to read in English and my parents – my parents, all they do is Spanish. Helping them read and speak English kind of made me realize that basically I'm supposed to be teaching and I do good when I teach. People learn.

I don't just meet you halfway and then expect you to do the rest, but make sure everybody gets it done and I think that's what – when I – before I graduated high school, I think – my teachers asked me what I wanted to do and I thought, so far, all of my teachers have been great and so I think I want to be a teacher, and then when I enrolled at Darton, I was like do y'all have a foreign language career? They said yes. So, I said I'd sign up for that, then. As long as it's teaching, I'll do it, but then I was thinking about changing to early childhood education and then I was like I don't know what that would be, so I'm like I'll just do it with the foreign languages and then I can just teach at any level I wanted. So, that's what influences me to become that.

I think the reason over there was the fact that we stayed in the city where all the trouble and all the crime were. I guess I wanted to be that to protect the community, but then when we moved back up here and there wasn't too much going on. Now there is, but back then there wasn't, but I still haven't changed my point of view. I'd rather be a teacher than put myself out there. There ain't no telling what will happen.

Interview with Zena (Williams Thornton, 2007)

- Melanie: Has this experienced encouraged you to volunteer more in your community?
- Zena: Well, from time to time I try to volunteer and help out some of the teachers if they need help with class. Yeah. Yes, ma'am.
- Melanie: In what ways were you changed by this volunteer project?
- Zena: It made me strive more for that goal and made we want to become better in that field. Yeah, it changed me. I read more. Try to understand what I'm reading. I try to read the best I can, scan and the passage and then I still have to read the whole passage to understand it.
- Melanie: *Do you read a lot now?*
- Zena: Not really.
- Melanie: *When you do read, what do you read?*
- Zena: Romance books.

Interview with McKenzie (Williams Thornton, 2007)

- Melanie: Has this experienced encouraged you to volunteer more in your community?
- McKenzie: When I was in high school, I did an after school mentoring program. So, I was already there with them. I Like Bike-a-thons or Walk-a-thons for like St. Jude's, and stuff like that. I did that kind of volunteer work and this year, I'm starting my education classes, so I'll do another volunteer work.
- Melanie: *How did you feel about being in the Read 99 class?*
- McKenzie: I was shocked, really, because I read a lot now – well, approaching like 11th grade, I started reading more, and then when I came here, I found out I was in the developmental reading class. I was shocked, but I knew it was also a process to starting somewhere. You had to start somewhere and that class really helped me learn about reading more than anything, but I think that I'm a better writer than reader, anyway.
- Melanie: *In what way did it help you learn about reading?*
- McKenzie: Well, like the different – like first person and second person in the story. I learned more about that. What else? Just the different ways of how to find

a subject or whatever in the story and let it flow through like that. Because on the COMPASS, I thought I did good, but they were saying that you had to read through the story thoroughly and read over the questions and stuff like that. When I took the test, I didn't read over the questions first, but people gave me different strategies to use when I took the compass.

Melanie: *Was this when you took the COMPASS for placement or when you were exiting?*

McKenzie: When I took it before [placement]. People were telling me, "Read over the questions before you take the test.," but I was going into test like, "I know I've got this. I'm not reading this." I know it was just a start in the developmental classes. my mamma was like, "Well, you just have to buckle down and start reading more and focus on your reading and that'll help you through this reading class", and stuff like that, but my cousin – one of my cousins, she graduated here behind me and she was in a reading developmental class, too, and she was like, "Now, I see what you mean about the COMPASS". I was like, "Yeah, it was kind of tough, but you just have to read carefully and take your time."

My views on teaching didn't change, but it taught me that you have to be strict, especially working with young children because they're harder to maintain. Older children probably can understand better than them. You have to take a little more time with younger children.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This study is the beginning of a larger study. The purpose of this part of the study was to explore using service learning to raise the critical consciousness of preservice teachers in developmental education. The study investigated this phenomenon with students who were enrolled in a developmental reading program. In connection to the work by Walker-Dalhouse and Dalhouse (2006) who noted that “the issue of teacher predisposition about cultural diversity is important especially when teaching children from different cultural backgrounds” (p.2). As a part of the study, I further analyzed whether service learning has the potential to transform preservice teachers into more culturally conscious teachers. There are three transformative change indicators that I looked for in the participants during the beginning of this study. The indication of raised consciousness was that students learned to question. Searching for answers to the questions was an indication of increased critical consciousness. The final change indicator relates to social justice. Students were viewed as future change agents for social justice when they took action after questioning issues and searching for answers to problems. Students also realize that taking action will sometimes put them at risk. Despite that, new cultural workers will challenge the authority of the educational hierarchy with the full knowledge of potential consequences to their professional career.

Community-based narrative inquiry was used to collect data from the preservice teachers. Etheridge (2006) states that a “cacophony of voices is continuing to place mandates on education and yet the voices of teachers are seldom heard. Teacher education programs can attempt to address the issue by facilitation of advocacy

experiences via service learning” (p.49). The voice of the participants was key to this study. Therefore, this form of narrative inquiry was chosen to assist in collecting students’ interviews. The five preservice teachers, Kathy, Denise, Alberto, McKenzie, and Zena, from Darton College recounted their experiences with service learning while enrolled in READ 0099, a developmental reading course.

The main research question was to determine how service learning in teacher education helps cultivate cultural workers for the future. Additionally, there were three sub-questions that were used to develop the collection of data. Those key questions included: (a) Does exposing preservice teachers to others from diverse backgrounds through service learning raise their levels of critical consciousness? (b) Does the involvement in service learning by preservice teachers transform them into cultural workers? (c) Does the use of service learning with preservice teachers have the potential to transform them into more culturally conscious teachers? These research questions were designed to determine if service learning can help to cultivate culturally sensitive workers for the future by examining the following areas: service learning experience, likes and dislikes concerning service learning, self-noted changes, and subsequent volunteerism. The most significant contribution found in this study was that there is a need to develop a curriculum that requires service learning with preservice teacher education majors prior to beginning their education courses. If teacher education programs want to cultivate preservice teachers to become cultural workers for the future, they must be willing to involve them early on in situations that could potentially enhance their cultural sensitivity and awareness. Service learning would provide an excellent vehicle for possible change and transformation. This is supported by the six major findings that resulted from this

dissertation study. (1) A positive sense of building community relationships is demonstrated through preservice teachers' transformative plans for future volunteering as new cultural workers. (2) Preservice teachers that begin college in developmental reading program understand the feeling of oppression and the need for social justice regardless of their ethnicity. (3) Preservice teachers develop a critical outlook towards the teaching profession and social justice issues. (4) Sharing stories, observations, and reflection raises preservice teachers' critical consciousness and empowers them to transfer newly acquired knowledge to their future classrooms. (5) A positive view of service and building community is directly linked to the influence of the family. (6) Preservice teachers show signs of transformative development as cultural workers through classroom observations, and service learning. These findings are supported by the participants' interviews, the literature review, and the theoretical framework of the study. This chapter presents the major findings of this study.

A positive sense of building community relationships is demonstrated through preservice teachers' transformative plans for future volunteering as new cultural workers (**Finding 1**). All of the participants stated that they had continued or will continue to serve the community in various ways as a result of the service learning experience. This finding is supported by Anna Julia Cooper's (1892) mantra, "lifting as we climb" (p.72). Through this and her consideration for service as a way of life, Cooper (1892) supported helping others as one attains higher goals. An example of this is seen in this study, Alberto is learning to share his knowledge with others through volunteering. He responded:

Since the service learning's been done and everything – through Darton, actually, I've taught two Spanish classes and this is going through the J building. Uh huh, Continuing Ed, and with the help of Miss Davis, of course, in class, she kind of knew what I could do and things I could not do, the things I could improve in and she gave me a challenge to go teach at Dawson to a small church. They were going on a mission trip and it was a Spanish country and they didn't really speak Spanish (Interview with Alberto, p.121).

Some of the participants had never volunteered before and their experiences with service-learning gave them the opportunity to see the world that surrounds them in a different light. For example, McKenzie expressed her desire to serve by participating in intermittent activities. "I like bike-a-thons or walk-a-thons for like St. Jude's, and stuff like that "(Interview with McKenzie, p.124).

In addition, three other students shared that they had participated in some type of volunteer work during their high school years. In each case, the volunteer work was related to the potential career that they wanted after high school and college. For instance, Zena knew that she wanted to become a teacher; therefore, her volunteer work took place in a school. Quiet and shy Denise volunteered as a mentor for middle school basketball players. The choices of these preservice teachers are supported by a study conducted by Ng (2006). The research focused on the impact of accountability and preservice teachers and noted that individuals who become teachers are uniquely oriented to value the intrinsic rewards of teaching. Connecting with students and making a difference in their lives represents one example of this. This is seen as several of the interviewees suggested

ways that preservice teachers could volunteer. For example, they could become active participants by tutoring children who are struggling to raise their reading scores.

The comments and suggestions offered by these five participants demonstrate that it was important to them that they continue to give back to the communities in which they had been raised by volunteering. Hence, students offered a plethora of suggestions for ways in which they could continue volunteering in their community and through that work help their communities. The suggestions included ideas for several areas. Nursing students could become volunteer readers on the pediatric wing of a hospital. They even suggested that criminal justice majors could volunteer in the court house. It was liberating for me as the researcher of this study to listen to the participants overflow with ideas to help others in the classroom.

Most of the participants were quiet and shy at the beginning of the READ 0099 course; but today, having completed the course along with service learning, they are animated and fully engaged. Through experiences such as these, this study has also afforded me an opportunity to witness my students breaking of the chain of mass education. Shor (1992) attributes the quietness that I speak of to mass schooling. “Mass schooling conditions students and teachers to think that education is rigorous only if the teacher does most of the talking” (Shor, 1992 p. 93). Conversely, Shor (1992) continues, “If a critical democratic teacher listens to students and encourages them to express themselves, students may question the validity of this dialogic education, precisely because it begins with their speech and respects their diversity and knowledge” (p.94). The thoughts, suggestions, and ideas of these preservice teachers have provided me with

a glimpse of the innovation these students could possibly display later on in their own classrooms.

All of the participants in this study, in one way or another shared their experiences of feeling the frustration of being required to take a developmental reading course in college. This feeling is a form of oppression. Preservice teachers that begin college in a developmental reading program understand the feeling of oppression and the need for social justice regardless of their ethnicity (**Finding 2**). Oppression, much like spirituality, has the ability to unite or separate people. This finding is supported by the work of Paulo Freire. In 1970, Freire espoused, “the more the oppressors control the oppressed, the more they change them into inanimate things” (p.59). Participants in this study conveyed an overwhelming feeling of failure or shame thereby proving Freire’s statement true. Feelings of oppression were discussed in the autobiographical roots section of Chapter 1. Here students described their experience in various ways; as embarrassing, shocking, or shame. Being consigned to a developmental course was yet another defeat according to these students. It was also perceived as another road block to their goal of becoming teachers.

Even though reactions varied, the participants in the study expressed feeling of oppression in relation to the placement in developmental classes. Denise described her initial reaction in the following question. “Why do I have to take these classes?” Zena, on the other hand, was not aware of what it meant to take remedial or developmental courses. Her experience was quite different from the other participants. She initially thought that the classes were, as she put it, “regular classes” (Interview with Zena, p.109). However, after finding out what it meant to be in developmental courses, she

thought that she was a failure. Kathy and McKenzie both described themselves as good readers. Kathy's response was immediate. "I was not happy. I was more or less ashamed because I'm good in reading and the fact that I was in reading, it kind of upset me because I feel that when I took the test if I would have paid attention and done a little bit better." McKenzie's response was similar. She stated, "I was shocked, really, because I read a lot now – well, approaching like 11th grade, I started reading more, and then when I came here, I found out I was in the developmental reading class" (Interview with McKenzie, p.124). She also described her attitude prior to the test. "When I took [the placement test], people were telling me, 'Read over the questions before you take the test.' But I was going into test like, 'I know I've got this. I'm not reading this [test]'" (Interview with McKenzie, p.124).

All of the respondents agreed that it was a setback for them when they realized they had been placed into developmental classes. Alberto's reaction, however, was somewhat different from the other participants. He seemed to believe that something positive was going to come out of the experience.

It was fine to me because it helped me with [my] reading skills. But it kind of put me behind with some classes I couldn't take, but it was all right, because now that I've taken the reading [class], I don't have to struggle through my English class or my literature classes. So, it worked out for the best. (Interview with Alberto, p. 108)

The preservice teachers in this study were able to overcome their initial feelings of embarrassment and came to see their time in developmental classes as necessary for their own educational development. They indicated that doing the service-learning

project diminished some of the bad feelings and embarrassment that they had regarding being placed into developmental classes. This finding is ground breaking. No other research was found in the literature search that discussed the embarrassment associated with developmental courses taken in college.

Preservice teachers develop a critical outlook towards the teaching profession and social justice issues (**Finding 3**). Teachers currently working in the field often voice their concerns about various issues that plague the teaching profession. The issues of low pay and a shortage of teachers dominate conversations in the field. Swerdlin (1981) declared that “low salaries and difficult working conditions are likely to perpetuate the shortage [of teachers].” My expectation as researcher was that the preservice teachers would not be concerned about these issues. I thought they would still be looking at the profession through rose-colored glasses. Quite to the contrary, the interviews showed that these participants were very vocal about their concerns regarding their chosen profession. The participants did not voice concerns over the curriculum, instead, their comments showed that they were constantly dissecting and analyzing the working conditions of their chosen profession. This finding is consistent with those of researcher Feinman-Nemser (2001). Feinman-Nemser (2001) reported that the students in her study also showed an increase in their critical thinking about teaching practice.

This concern for salaries and job conditions is seen in interview comments made by McKenzie, Denise, and Zena. The students were primarily concerned about two main problems that plague the teaching field; teachers’ pay and the shortage of teachers in the field. McKenzie voiced her apprehension in this manner, “I just think that more people should major in teaching because you're always going to need teachers [and] most of the

time, [you will need] nurses” (Interview with McKenzie, p.110). In Denise’s case, because she was engaged in service learning, she paid closer attention to what was going on in the profession.

Well, it [service learning] helped me understand. I mean, I know there's a [big] shortage of teachers right now and, I mean teachers, they really don't get paid enough for the work that they do. I think that they should be able to get paid more because they do a lot of work, teachers do. Well, some classrooms have ... about thirty or forty students in one class because they don't have enough teachers to help out. (Interview with Denise, p.113).

Denise was also concerned about the lack of African American teachers in schools. She stated, “... you don't see any African Americans. You don't see too many in schools” (Interview with Denise, p.114). Zena shared a similar concern.

I believe there is shortage because of the pay. If they increased the teacher's pay, there wouldn't be no shortage because teachers, they go to school for a good period of time. They're taking a lot of tests that, in the end, it really doesn't pay off, because some majors, they don't take that many tests and they're getting paid more than the teachers are and they're the focus of America. They're teaching the folks. I think teachers should get paid more than they are now. (Interview with Zena, p.118)

For the most part these young students were interested in contributing to their community by becoming teachers so that they could remedy some of the disadvantages they had experienced during their own education. Two students, McKenzie and Alberto, shared an experience or gave me insight into how they feel about racism and oppression.

McKenzie shared a moving experience that occurred while she while growing up in Miami, Florida.

I went to two different elementary schools [as a child]. The first elementary school I went to was in Miami. Most of my teachers were Caucasian or Mexican, something like that, but none of them were African American. I thought African Americans couldn't be teachers. That's what I thought. Because I only saw, you know, Caucasian teachers. Then, when I came here, well, to Calhoun County, it was a mixture of teachers and I see that growing now as I've graduated from the Calhoun County School System. There's a mixture of teachers.

(Interview with McKenzie, p.110)

It is my belief as the researcher that the experience shared above has greatly contributed to McKenzie wanting to return to a large school system to work. She wants other African American students to have a teacher that looks like them as a role model in school. She believes that teaching in a large school, in a big city, will give her a better experience. Ladson-Billings (1994) supports this notion in her statement that “because many African American students live in and attend schools in communities that their teachers neither live in nor choose to frequent after school hours means that few have the opportunity to interact with their teachers out side the classroom” (p.53).

Alberto also shared his experience with oppression during the interview. In the quote below, he discusses his original career selection of becoming a policeman. This decision was directly related to him living in a troubled section of town.

Before ...I lived in California and I wanted to be a cop, but when I came to Georgia, here is a new thing for me and so what ended up happening is that I

wasn't in my comfort zone and so I went inside into like a shell and kept to myself, and by doing that, I kind of spent more time with my teachers than anybody else would. (Interview with Alberto, p.122)

According to Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994, p.73) “living in a community ravaged by drugs, unemployment, underemployment, high drop-out rates, high crime, and poverty spawns an innate pessimism in the children.” Alberto’s comments suggest that if his family had continued to live in California, he would have become a police officer in order to protect his community. In his words, if this had become reality, “There ain’t no telling what [would have] happened.”

All of the participants spoke of making a difference in the community and the teaching profession. Most of them referred to filling the critical need for minority teachers. Kathy was the only participant that did not reveal her thoughts on race. She may not see the relevance of discussing race due to the structure of her educational experience and family background. Kathy is aware of differences but she has not had many opportunities to discuss race in an open forum.

Sharing stories, observations, and reflection raises preservice teachers’ critical consciousness and empowers them to transfer new found knowledge to their future classrooms (**Finding 4**). From the interviews it became clear that pre-service teachers value participating in service learning because it gives them a preview into the differences they can make in their future classrooms Research supports this in stating that “teachers at every level should serve as change agents for acceptance and sensitivity by being equipped to demonstrate appropriate behavior in addressing diversity as part of the framework of learning given the opportunity” (Valentin, 2006, p.2). Most importantly,

during the interview process, students' responses to the interview questions showed that they had been changed by their experience with the service learning project. This claim is further supported by the work of Shor and Freire (1987). According to these theorists, "transformation is possible consciousness is not a mirror of reality, not a mere reflection, but reflexive and reflective of reality" (Shor & Freire, 1987, p.49). The changes revealed by this study were more evident in students that had previously done volunteer work or continued to serve the community after the service learning project. This relates directly to Dewey's (1963) theory that education is a social experience. The students' interactions with others during this project contributed to their way of thinking about education.

Several of the participants remarked that the service project helped them to understand that being a teacher was harder than they had once thought and that they recognized now that they would have to be stricter with students than they ever thought they would have to be. These observations represent a type of retrospective reflection that is supported by Etheridge (2006). "The role of reflection through the process helped the students to continually assess the effectiveness of their efforts..." (Etheridge, 2006, p.63). The participants made mental notes about how they would handle the same situations in their future classroom practices. McKenzie summed this up in the statement below.

It gave me the experience to see what I'm headed towards, what I'm going to be up for with the challenges of working with young children. My views on teaching didn't change, but it taught me that you have to be strict, especially working with young children because they're harder to maintain. Older children probably can understand better than them. You have to take a little more time with younger

children because they're energetic and like to be on the go. (Interview with McKenzie, p.119)

Teacher education programs must provide opportunities to have experiences with diverse populations prior to students beginning their education courses. According to Valentin (2006), “opportunities need to be provided for preservice teachers to explore their own values and beliefs pertaining to cultural diversity because they will impact their teaching” (p.199). The students in this study were empowered because they participated in bring value to their education. They learned that service has value and for one to serve is empowering.

A positive view of service and building community is directly linked to the influence of the family. **(Finding 5)**. The more support the students had from family members the more they valued the combination of reading and service learning. This finding is supported by interviews from McKenzie, Alberto, Zena, and Denise as they explained to their families that they were going to be doing service learning in the READ 0099 course. For example, Zena’s mother who is a secretary at the school where Zena did her service learning project was familiar with the service learning program and pushed her to get involved. McKenzie, also, received advice from both her mother and from her cousin concerning her reading skills and course participation.

My mamma was like, "Well, you just have to buckle down and start reading more and focus on your reading and that'll help you through this reading class", and stuff like that, but my cousin – one of my cousins, she graduated here behind me and she was in a reading developmental class, too, and she was like, "Now, I see what you mean about the COMPASS". I was like, "Yeah, it was kind of tough,

but you just have to read carefully and take your time.” (Interview with McKenzie, p.124)

Alberto told his family about the reading course first and the service portion later. He recounts the story below:

I told them that because I didn't do too [well], I had to get better on my reading skills and things like that. That was fine [with them], as long as it helped [me] out. I mean, when I got it done and everything... [I told them]. (Interview with Alberto, p.109)

The way that Kathy told her family was different from the other participants because she interacted with her immediate family in a different manner. In the quote below, she gave me a glimpse into the way she communicates with her family.

My friends thought it was good. They thought it was really good that I was volunteering, but my family, I didn't [tell]. They ask how school goes and I say “fine” and that's the end of the conversation. They try [to pry]. I just kind of cut [the conversation] off. I just –I don't know. It's not something I just do. My family's just not the type where you just sit down at a dinner table and talk about things. I just try to leave it to my friends. (Interview with Kathy, p.106)

In Kathy's case, she considers her friends to be her true family; therefore, upon further hence, she informed the people that she calls family about what was going on in her academic life. In each student's case this study has proven that it is not what family members say in support of their students, rather, it is important for them to know that the family is aware of what is going on in their lives.

Preservice teachers show signs of transformative development as cultural workers through classroom observations, and service learning. **(Finding 6)**. John Dewey's work supports this finding. Dewey states that "[w]hen a meaning is detached and fixed by a sign, it is possible to use that meaning in a new context and situation. The transfer [of meaning] and reapplication is the key to all judgment and inference" (Dewey, 1997 p.171). This phenomenon is demonstrated as all of the interviewees reported that participating in the service-learning project exceeded their expectations for the course. The students thought that they would have to read elementary school reading books. This misconception is a contributing factors to students being embarrassed and angry about being in a developmental reading course. Denise described the help that she received:

I'm a shy person and that [service learning] helped me get over my shyness with them [students] because I was really nervous before I started reading. It helped me out a lot and it let me know that I can [do it] – like, when I would get ready to teach. I can stand up in front of my class and teach. (Interview with Denise, p.101)

The participants entered the developmental reading course feeling as though they were failures or with anger over the placement. However, that fear and embarrassment faded away as they became involved in the class and the service learning project. They learned to appreciate where they were in their education. Zena explained:

When I was in ... class, we broke down the basics of reading tools and it made me understand it better. I had weakness in reading. I would have to reread the passage over to make me understand it better. That class broke it down better. I got a better understanding. (Interview with Zena, p.103)

All of the participants reported being happy to read better. Kathy, however, shared her feelings about the benefits that she received from her service learning experience.

They [the students] wanted to hear [a story] and it was good to know that you were wanted ... there. They wanted you to be there, because I would walk down the hallways, just being there when I wasn't supposed to [reading] – and having the kids yell out, "Hey, Miss Kathy." I enjoyed that a lot.

(Interview with Kathy, p.106).

She also shared her final feelings at the end of the course. "It was a good thing because it retaught me all the things that I needed to know about reading and ... things that I could use in my English classes" (Interview with Kathy, p. 106). In the final analysis, all of the participants realized that reading was the most important factor in their education.

Service learning in developmental reading gives students an opportunity to practice their reading skills while helping others.

Although my study focused on pre-service teachers enrolled in a developmental reading program, it has benefits for higher education administrators, researchers, and instructors. Pre-service teachers are not the only students that could benefit from service learning experience. Higher education administrators should do more to explore the advantages of having all students, regardless of their majors, participate in service learning projects as requirements for graduation. Such a requirement has the potential to encourage students to develop a closer connection with their communities and the obligations that they have within those communities. The reflective process of service learning has possibilities for both undergraduate and graduate students.

This study leads to further questions for higher education instructors. Conducting a comparative study of developmental reading students who participate in service-learning projects and those who do not to determine if there are differences in the outcomes for these students in their developmental reading classes would be a natural extension of this study. It would be interesting to see whether such differences, if there are some, are quantifiable. Researchers should continue to look at ways of helping students who enter college with reading deficiencies. As shown in this study, students often feel great frustration, a loss of self-esteem, and embarrassment when they are placed in remedial or developmental programs. It seems important that educational researchers look for ways to eliminate these feelings of frustration and embarrassment.

Higher education administrators and instructors should research teacher education programs located in rural communities and on two year college campuses. These programs should be encouraged or required to provide service learning experiences for pre-service teachers for the reasons of social justice and empowerment.

The beginning of this study, my dissertation, must conclude. As it does, the lives of the participants evolve. The student participants in this study have progressed through the current school year. An update concerning their progress is necessary to the study to give the reader a clear picture from beginning to end.

Kathy reported that the interview for this study made her think. She realized that she did not know as much about diverse populations, and she asked me for help in finding a volunteer placement for the summer. She will be working with students at Bethel Community Center. This program is a summer “get ahead” program for rising second to fifth grade students.

Both Kathy and Alberto mentioned marriage plans during the interview process. Kathy has tabled her marriage plans. She will graduate during summer semester. She will transfer to Georgia Southwestern State University. Alberto and his fiancé are planning an August wedding. He has accepted a job with Dominos Pizza as an assistant manager. After graduation, he will continue to go to school part-time at Albany State University.

Denise has quit her part-time job because she has received a scholarship through a pageant. She now plans to devote all of her time to getting out of school and entering more beauty pageants. McKenzie and Zena both have changed their major from early childhood education to special education. They both shared that they believed that they would be needed in that part of the field. McKenzie expressed the idea that she believes she needs to be in the special education classroom to get students that have been mislabeled out of special education. She has a desire to be certified in multiple areas of the field so that she can help as many students as possible. She has become a social justice crusader by speaking out at campus student forums about diversity and political involvement. During Chancellor Davis' recent visit to the campus, McKenzie led a delegation of students that discussed diversity and technology issues with him. During the forum, McKenzie did not receive an answer to one of her questions; she spoke up and restated the question. Again after not receiving an answer, she boldly challenged his authority by informing him that her question was not answered. All of the participants are continuing on the educational tract but on different roads.

I sincerely hope that my study contributes to a theoretical framework for perceiving service learning as a way of connecting education with life in the school and community, as a participatory and liberating process, as community based initiatives and

outcomes, and as ways of raising critical consciousness, fostering empowerment, and building community. I sincerely hope that policymakers, teacher educators, and communities work together to develop a curriculum with service learning as the major conceptual framework to cultivate pre-service and in-service teachers to cultural workers in an increasingly diversifying world.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
CONSENT FORM

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM, FOUNDATIONS, AND READING

INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Project: Cultivating Cultural Workers through Service Learning in Teacher Education

Principal Investigator: Melanie Williams Thornton

Project Supervisor: Dr. Ming Fang He, Professor, Georgia Southern University

1. As a Georgia Southern University Student and a reading instructor, I am interested in doing this study in order to hear the voices of pre-service teachers who began their academic career enrolled in a developmental reading course, with a service learning component.
2. Purpose: A study will be conducted involving your perspective as a former developmental education student and as a current pre-service teacher on the use of service learning.
3. Procedures to be followed: Participation in this research will include your completion of a taped individual and or group interview. You will be asked to respond to, and discuss guided questions related to the study topic.

Audio-taping will be used in this project to record participants' interviews. All tapes will be stored in the locked file cabinet in the researcher's office in the F-building on the campus of Darton College in Albany, Georgia. As the researcher, I will have access to the tapes, as well as my dissertation supervisor, Dr. Ming Fang He. The tapes will be destroyed upon completion of my dissertation defense. I plan to complete the dissertation process during the 2006-2007 academic year (including defense). Tapes will then be demagnetized and destroyed.

4. Discomforts and Risks: Participation in this study has the potential to cause a minimal degree of personal discomfort. The study requires you to share personal your personal experience.
5. Benefits: Participation in this study has the potential to provide the participant the benefit of first hand use of reflective practice in education research.
6. Duration/Time: It will take about 30-45 minutes to complete each interview.

7. Statement of Confidentiality: Only the researcher, Melanie Williams Thornton, and the project supervisor, Dr. Ming Fang He, will know the identity of the participants. No information that will identify you will be shared. Pseudonyms will be used to represent all study participants.
8. Right to Ask Questions: Participants have the right to ask questions and have those questions answered. If you have questions about this study, please contact the researcher named above or the researcher's faculty advisor, whose contact information is located at the end of the informed consent. For questions concerning your rights as a research participant or the IRB approval process, contact Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at 912-486-7758.
9. Compensation: There will be no compensation for participation in this study.
10. Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time without penalty. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not wish to for any reason.
11. Penalty: There is no penalty for deciding not to participate in the study. You may decide at any time that you do not want participate further and may withdraw without penalty or retribution.
12. No children will be used in this study. You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to participate in this research study. If you consent to participate in this research study and to the terms above, please sign your name and indicate the date below.

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your records.

Title of Project: Cultivating Cultural Workers through Service Learning in Teacher Education

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Participant Signature

Date

I, the undersigned, verify that the above informed consent procedure has been followed.

Investigator Signature

Date

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROMPTS

Interview Prompts

1. How was your experience of service learning?
2. What was the best thing you experienced during the service learning project?
3. What were some of the things that you learned doing the service learning project?
4. What didn't you like about the service learning project?
5. How do you think doing this project affected the way you look at teaching now?
6. In what ways were you changed by this volunteer project?
7. Has this experience encouraged you to volunteer more in your community?
8. Would you recommend that other classes involve students in a service learning project?
9. If you had to name one descriptive word to your service learning project experience, what would that term be?
10. If you could have changed one thing about the service learning project, what would it be?